

LESSON 4
LIVING IN PEACE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3

GOD'S BIG STORY: Paul reminds believers we're called to love and forgive others and that our faith in Christ and His presence in us through the Holy Spirit helps 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 (NirV)

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Curiosity Activity: Forgiveness Eraser
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing





INVITATION

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

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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.



LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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Welcome

Slide: Series Welcome Loop

As kids arrive...

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat.

Leader: Hi, everyone! Tac the Cat told me earlier that he wanted to come visit us today. Let's welcome him and say, "Hello!"

Tac the Cat: Well, thank you, friends! I'm glad that I could come visit you today. As usual, you know I have a question for you all. I heard you mention earlier that we can live in peace. Peace ... I'm a little confused about that. Are you talking about a piece of pizza or a piece of cake?

Leader: Ah! Tac, you heard us say that we can live in peace with others because God helps us love and forgive.

Tac the Cat: Yeah! That was it! What does that mean? What is peace?

Leader: That's a great question, Tac! I'm so glad you asked. We're talking about a different kind of peace. Peace is when there is no trouble in our minds and our hearts. It means that we don't always feel afraid or angry. We are in good relationship with God and with other people.

Tac the Cat: Oh wow! That sounds important! I was in a fight with a friend the other day. Maybe we can have peace.

Leader: You certainly can! God is the only One who can give us true peace. He gives us peace and helps us be at peace with others. God helps us love and forgive others.

Tac the Cat: That is great! Even better than a piece of pizza or a piece of cake! Although now I kind of have a craving for pizza and cake. I want to go offer some to a friend I was in a fight with and see if we can work out our differences.

Leader: That is a wonderful idea, Tac. Peace from God is a gift, and we can share it with others. Tac, thank you for coming to see us today, and thank you for asking such good questions! We'll see you next time!

Tac the Cat: Thanks! See you next time! I'm going to go get some pizza and cake and offer it to my friend.

"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: How can we have peace with others? Allow the kids to respond. How do I love and forgive others? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how God helps us live in peace?"

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD HELPS US LOVE AND FORGIVE**. Today, we'll discover how God helps us love and forgive!"

Curiosity Activity: Forgiveness Eraser

SUPPLIES: permanent marker; paper; pencil with eraser; chalk, chalkboard, and eraser or whiteboard, dry-erase marker, and dry-erase eraser

"Do you know what it means to forgive someone? Allow kids to respond. Forgiveness means we don't hold on to it when someone does something wrong to us. We let it go. We all do things wrong called sin, and God forgives us. Can you think of an example of a sin? Allow kids to have time to think and respond. If they need help, offer ideas such as stealing a toy from a friend, disobeying parents, or hitting someone.

As the kids name sins, write down the examples on the sheet of paper using permanent marker. After you have filled the paper with different examples of sins, show the kids that those words cannot be erased. Use a pencil eraser and whiteboard eraser to emphasize this. Now, write some of same words on a dry-erase board with a dry-erase marker or chalkboard with chalk. **Now do you think I can erase these sins? Yes!** Read aloud and point to each sin and then erase it while you say, "Forgiven."

Forgiveness is like the eraser, and our lives are like the board. When we do wrong things and ask God to forgive us, He will! Those sins are wiped away and gone forever. He doesn't hold our sins against us. Although we may still experience consequences from our sins or wrong choices, God doesn't hold our sins against us. He makes us new and clean. God is the best at forgiving! He can forgive us because Jesus paid for our sins when He died on the cross. We can forgive others when they do wrong things to us because God forgives us. Today we'll learn that we can live in peace with others because God helps us love and forgive!"

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

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

"Let's say these words together."

Thank You, God, that You made me! (Kids repeat.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; (Kids repeat.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. (Kids repeat.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, (Kids repeat.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. (Kids repeat.)

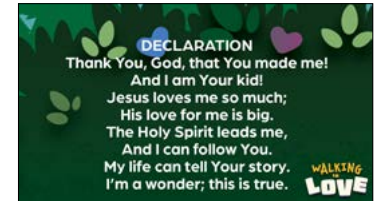
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. (Kids repeat.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. (Kids repeat.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



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

"Today, we'll learn about how God helps us live in peace. Let's sing about peace together!"

WORSHIP VIDEOS: BREAKER ROCK BEACH, I LOVE YOU SO MUCH

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Colossians 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 watch part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Colossians in the Bible. Colossians is in the New Testament.

VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: Bible

"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! Review the motions again and assist any kids who need help. **I think we're ready! Let's listen to God's big story!**

A follower of Jesus named Paul wrote letters to Christians, and one of them is a letter to the Colossians. Paul said, "You have been raised up with Christ. So think about things that are in heaven" (Colossians 3:1). Heaven is God's space. Paul said, "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). Paul said Christians shouldn't live in sin—that's anything we do that isn't what God wants. He said we should live a new life for Jesus when He is our Savior. The wrong things are forgiven (brush your right fingertips along your left palm), and we are completely changed and made new through the Holy Spirit.

Paul also said, "You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved (hands on heart). 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 (praying hands).

Because God forgives us (brush your right fingertips along your left palm), we must forgive (brush your right fingertips along your left palm) others and live at peace (praying hands) with others. Paul says, "Put on love (hands on heart). Love (hands on heart). 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 (praying hands) and love (hands on heart) and forgive (brush your right fingertips along your left palm) others."

Connecting the Wonder Truth

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

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD HELPS US LOVE AND FORGIVE**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

Jesus-followers are filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible says we are temples—or houses for God—because the Holy Spirit lives in us! Jesus died on the cross for us so we can be forgiven. Now with the Holy Spirit's help, we can love and forgive others like Jesus!" (See 1 Corinthians 6:19.)

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for His forgiveness. Use your own words; with these as a guide if needed.

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. Use your own words, with these as a guide if needed.

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.