

LESSON 2

JESUS LOVES THE WORLD

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Because Jesus Loves Me, I Am Loved

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1; John 3

GOD'S BIG STORY: Though sin damaged God's good creation and separated people from God, God loved the world so much that He sent His Son, Jesus. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, followers of Jesus can live securely in God's love.

WORD OF WONDER: You are majestic and holy. Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things.
—Exodus 15:11b

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: What is one way you show others that you love them?
- Curiosity Questions
- God's Big Story
- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: What Do You See?
- Preteen Responding in Worship: The Face in the Mirror



[Faith Begins with Wonder Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Because Jesus Loves Me, I Am Loved

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1; John 3

WORD OF WONDER: Exodus 15:11b

Read Colossians 1:15–23 and John 3:16–17. Sometimes I have trouble believing Jesus really loves me, even though His love is all over the pages of Scripture. Instead of remembering His love, I remember ways I’ve disobeyed God or gone against His perfect plan. Then I start thinking that maybe God is mad at me. Or that God doesn’t like me. Or wondering how God could love someone who’s done what I’ve done. Do you ever feel that way?

The voice of accusation is loud and unrelenting, whether it comes from our own hearts or the devil himself. Regularly, I pray, “God, help me hear Your voice above the voice of the accuser.” Amen, right?

I need to hear God’s big story, over and over again. I need to hear about Jesus, the rescuer who came to break the power of sin and gather the broken parts of creation back to God. Even me. And even you! He presents us to God without blemish and free from accusation. He loves us!

Because Jesus loves me, I am loved. God’s big story says so, and God’s big story is true. Will you hold onto His love today? Will you share it with the kids you serve this week? After all, they need to hear the story too. Again and again. Jesus loves us! Amen, right?

—**Michael Rade**

Care & Support Ministry Assistant; Itinerant Preacher
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Jesus is the divine Son of God, uncreated and eternal. He is the exact likeness of God, perfectly revealing who God is because He is Himself God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is Savior of the world and Lord of creation.

WHAT?

Jesus came to save the world, bringing life to those who believe. Jesus loved the world and, by dying on the cross, He made the way to reconcile all things to God. Through Jesus' death, God made peace with people, bringing them back to Himself.

WHERE?

Paul wrote Colossians as a letter to the church in Colossae. Colossae was located in the Roman province of Phrygia in the territory of Asia Minor. The Gospel of John may have been written in Ephesus, which was about 100 miles east of Colossae.

WHEN?

These passages discuss who the Son of God has been from all eternity, before the beginning of creation. They also discuss what happened when the eternal Son took on flesh and became a man, dying on the cross in approximately AD 30.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus' death and resurrection is the central event of history. Through Jesus' death on the cross, the same God who created all things redeemed all things—defeating death and breaking the power of sin, making way for a new heaven and a new earth.

LESSON 2 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Small Group

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Because Jesus Loves Me, I Am Loved

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1; John 3

WORD OF WONDER: Exodus 15:11b

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

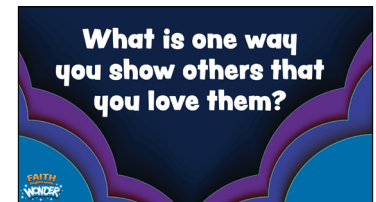
RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready 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.

As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question on the designated board or set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.



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.

- **Think about these two statements: "I love pizza" and "I love my family." What is similar about them? What is different?**
- **If someone asked you to define the word love, what would you say?**

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible; *Word of Wonder Poster (1/SG)*

WORD OF WONDER

Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things.

—Exodus 15:11c

The Word of Wonder for the Faith Begins with Wonder series is Exodus 15:11c. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together. Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **YOUR GLORY FILLS ME**—Hold hands up above your head, then move them down to your sides.
- **WITH WONDER**—Burst hands to the sides above your head.
- **YOU DO**—Point up.
- **AMAZING THINGS**—Jump up and burst hands out to the sides as wide as you can.
- **EXODUS 15:11C**—Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.

Now we're going to take turns saying the verse one word at a time. When I point to you, you can say the next word until we're all done saying the verse. We might say the verse a few times!

Have the kids sit in a line. Point to one kid at a time to prompt each one to say the next word. The kids may need you to say the word with them, or they can also repeat the word after you. You can simply go down the line of kids as you point to them, or you can mix up the order.

Discuss these questions:

- **What amazing things does God do?** (If the kids need help, offer ideas such as: making the world, beating death and sin, or forgiving us.)
- **How do you know Jesus loves you?** (If the kids need help, offer ideas such as: the Bible tells me, my parents tell me, He made me, Jesus died on the cross for me.)

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

You are majestic and holy. Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things.

—Exodus 15:11b (NIRV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, paper (1 sheet per kid), tape

Today we've seen how Jesus loves each of us. Because Jesus loves us, we can always know that we are loved. How amazing it is to be loved by such an amazing God! Our Word of Wonder reminds us of this. Open your Bible to Exodus 15:11b.

Invite kids to make a simple megaphone by rolling a sheet of paper into a cone shape, with a small opening at one end and a large opening at the other. Secure kids' megaphones with tape. Make one for yourself as well.



Next, ask the kids if they've ever heard an announcer at a big sporting event. Speaking into your homemade megaphone, demonstrate how the announcer's voice echoes. Explain that we are going to celebrate God's glory by adding an echo to each word in our Word of Wonder. Invite kids to stand up and repeat each word you say of the verse into their megaphones four times, getting softer each time (to create the echo effect). Example: Leader shouts "You!" and the kids can echo "You, You, You, You." At the end of the Word of Wonder, invite the kids to shout and cheer to God.

Leader Tip: For Preteens. After you've led the verse once, give them a chance to lead the echo.

Make It Inclusive: Be ready to aid any kids who have fine motor needs. For example, you can help them roll and tape their papers.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), [Bible Story Picture \(1/SG\)](#)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find John 3. As kids find the passage, explain that Paul wrote the book of Colossians to help people understand who Jesus really is. He reminded them that Jesus made everything, holds everything together, and came to bring us back to God. Then in the Gospel of John, written by one of Jesus' disciples, we read how much God loves the world and why He sent Jesus. These verses were written at different times—Colossians around A.D. 60 and John likely around A.D. 90—but both show how Jesus is the center of God's big rescue plan. Read the passage from Colossians first, then John.

Passage: Colossians 1:15–23; John 3:16–17

For Older Kids:

Before reading, turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand more about the context of this passage. Consider having confident readers read parts of the passage(s).

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids

SUPPLIES: ball

Gather the kids to sit in a circle and show them the ball. **We're learning about how Jesus loves the world so much. Our world is round, so we're going to use a ball to help us remember that Jesus loves the world. We're going to pass a ball around the circle. To show love to each other, we're going to pass the ball gently. I'll play some music. If the music stops while you're holding the ball, you get to answer a question.**

Begin the game with the ball by handing it to one kid. Play music from the [Faith Begins with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as the group passes the ball around. Then pause the music from time to time for the kid holding the ball to answer a question.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What did God do way back in the very beginning?** *(He made the world; He made people.)*
- **How did God feel about His creation?** *(He loved everything that He made; He said it was good.)*
- **What happened when the first people disobeyed God?** *(They sinned; they messed up God's perfect creation; sin came into the world; people were separated from God.)*
- **How did Jesus show us God's love?** *(God sent Jesus to earth so we can be saved; He died and came back to life. He forgives us.)*
- **When you think about Jesus' love for you, how does it make you feel?**
- **Share about someone who loves you and how you know that person loves you.**
- **Can you think of someone who needs to know about Jesus' love?**

Today in God's big story, we learned about Jesus' love for us. God shows us His love by creating the world, sending Jesus to die on the cross, and making the way for us to be close to Him. When we pray, we get to have a conversation with the person who loves us so much—Jesus! Let's pray now.

Small Group Prayer Time

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.

Elementary Questions

- **What came into the world and separated people from God?** (*sin*)
- **What did Jesus do to break the power of sin?** (*He died on the cross.*)
- **What did Jesus do to break the power of death?** (*He rose from the grave.*)
- **How has Jesus shown you that He loves you?**
- **When you think about Jesus' love for you, how does it make you feel?**
- **Who can you tell about Jesus' love?**

Today in God's big story, we learned about Jesus' love for us. He showed us His love by creating the world, dying on the cross, and making the way for us to be close to God. When we pray, we get to have a conversation with the person who loves us most of all—Jesus! Let's pray now.

Preteen Questions

- **Starting with the first man and woman, people have sinned. What is sin?** (*Sin is anything we think, say, or do that disobeys God and goes against His perfect plan.*)
- **What did Jesus do to break the power of sin over us and over creation?** (*He died on the cross.*)
- **Jesus makes us holy in God's eyes. What does that mean?** (*It means that we are without any flaw and free from the blame of sin.*)
- **Jesus loves you always, even when you do something wrong. How does that make you feel?**
- **How can knowing Jesus loves you affect how you respond when things are going badly? How about when things are going well?**
- **Is there someone at school, in your neighborhood, or in your family who needs to hear that Jesus loves them? Who?**

Maybe you've heard that Jesus loves you all your life. Or maybe you're hearing those words for the first time. No matter what, they are some of the most important words you will ever hear. Sometimes, people in our lives might not behave in a loving way. But you are always loved because Jesus loves you. Let's spend some time now talking in prayer to the One who loves us most of all!

Small Group Prayer Time

Ask kids if there is anything happening in their lives that they want to pray about. Remind them that we can pray about problems we need help with, and we can pray to thank God for the good things He has done. Either way, we are talking to someone who loves us so much! Consider inviting willing volunteers to pray aloud for the requests that were shared.

PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

Responding in Worship (Younger): What Do You See?

SUPPLIES: handheld or full-length mirrors (1 per 8–10 kids plus 1), red dry-erase marker, small craft mirrors (1 per kid, optional), red permanent marker (optional)

RESOURCES: [Faith Begins with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, use a red dry-erase marker to draw a large heart on each handheld or full-length mirror, leaving only one without a heart (the one you will hold or place next to you). Give the handheld mirrors to different leaders. Or if you are using full-length mirrors, station a leader near each mirror. Hold a mirror in your hand or stand next to it (if using a full-length mirror). Have the red dry-erase marker in your hand or pocket. If you plan on sending small craft mirrors home with kids, draw a large heart on each mirror with permanent red marker.

Prepare your leaders for this activity by letting them know what to expect. Those holding or standing near mirrors will speak the WonderTruth over each kid near the end of the activity.

Show them the mirror you are holding. **When you look in the mirror, what do you see?** Pause for kids to answer. **That's right! You may see lots of different things, but mostly you see yourself.**

If there were a mirror in front of you all the time, would it ever show your face looking sad?

Show me those sad faces! Give the kids a chance to look sad while you pass the mirror in front of them. **Would the mirror ever show an angry face? Show me!** Pass the mirror in front of the kids while they make angry faces. **Wow, those are some angry faces!**

Make It Inclusive: Kids who are neurodivergent may need more explicit instructions. For example, "Show me your angry face ... when we're angry, our eyebrows usually go down, we might scrunch our noses, and our mouths might be frowning."

What other kinds of faces might the mirror show you making? Give kids a chance to respond. **If that mirror was in front of us all the time, we would see some good reflections of ourselves, and some not-so-good ones. You might see yourself being helpful, or you might see yourself being selfish. You might see yourself obeying your parents and teachers, or you might see yourself disobeying. You might see yourself telling the truth, or you might see yourself telling a lie.**

Look in the mirror. **When I look in the mirror, I don't always see someone who seems very loveable. But the Bible tells me that Jesus loves me. I am loved.** Use the dry-erase marker to draw a large red heart on the mirror so that it frames your face when you look into it. Show it to the kids. **And so are you!**

The heart on this mirror is a reminder of Jesus' love for us. In a moment, you are going to have a chance to go to one of the mirrors in the room. As you look at your face in the mirror, remember today's Wonder Truth: Because Jesus loves me, I am loved!

Play worship music from the [Faith Begins with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as you invite kids to go to one of the handheld or full-length mirrors in the room. As each kid takes a turn looking into the mirror, have the leader nearby say to each kid, “Jesus loves you, [insert name of kid], you are loved!”

When all the kids have had an opportunity to look in a mirror, turn down the music. **We can be secure in Jesus’ love. That means Jesus will never take His love away from us. No matter what. Because Jesus loves us, we are loved.**

If you have small craft mirrors with a heart drawn on them for all the kids, hand them out at this time. Invite kids to take the mirrors home, and encourage them to look in the mirror whenever they want to be reminded that Jesus loves them.

Make It Inclusive: If you have kids with mobility issues, bring a mirror to them.

Responding in Worship (Older): The Face in the Mirror

SUPPLIES: handheld or full-length mirror, red dry-erase marker, eraser, small craft mirrors (1 per kid), red permanent markers (several), fine-tip dry-erase markers (1 per kid), paper towels (1 sheet per kid), cardboard (optional), scissors (prep only, optional), aluminum foil (optional)

RESOURCES: [Faith Begins with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, set the full-length or handheld mirror and red dry-erase marker on your stage area. Set the small craft mirrors, fin-tipped dry-erase markers, red permanent markers, and paper towel sheets where they are available to hand out to kids. Alternatively, rather than using small craft mirrors, create small homemade mirrors by cutting cardboard into 4" x 4" squares, one per kid. Carefully tear sheets of aluminum foil that are large enough to wrap around the cardboard squares, one sheet per kid. Set them next to the red permanent markers and paper towel sheets.

Show them the mirror you are holding **When you look in the mirror, what do you see?** Pause for kids to answer. **That’s right! You see a reflection of yourself and of any other objects or people in front of the mirror.** Hold up the mirror so that kids can see themselves reflected in it.

If there were a mirror in front of you all the time, what would it show? Allow kids to think quietly and share ideas if they’d like **Would the mirror ever show your face looking sad?** Invite kids to show their best sad faces as you pass the mirror in front of them. **Would the mirror ever show an angry face?** Now invite kids to make angry faces as you pass the mirror in front of them.

Make It Inclusive: Kids who are neurodivergent may need more explicit instructions. For example, “Show me your angry face ... when we’re angry, our eyebrows usually go down, we might scrunch our noses, and our mouths might be frowning.”

Hand out a small craft mirror to each kid. Or, if making homemade mirrors instead, give each kid a cardboard square and sheet of aluminum foil. Invite them to wrap their foil tightly around their squares with the shiny side facing out. These homemade mirrors won’t be perfect, but kids should still be able to see blurry reflections of themselves in them. **If you had a mirror in front of you all the time, it might show you doing and saying a variety of things, some good and some not-so-good.** Give a fine-tip dry-erase marker to each kid.

Take a few moments to write or draw three things on your mirror—good or bad—that you might see in the mirror. Maybe you’d see yourself helping a friend or sibling, or maybe you’d see yourself being selfish. You might see yourself obeying your parents and teachers, or you might see yourself disobeying. You might see yourself telling the truth, or you might see yourself telling a lie. Pause for kids to reflect, but assure them they won’t be asked to share what they write or draw on their mirrors. After 1–2 minutes of reflection, invite kids to give you their attention. Look in the handheld or full-length mirror. **When I look in the mirror, I don’t always see someone who seems very loveable.** Take a dry erase-marker and scribble on the mirror. **But when I choose to follow Jesus, I am holy and without flaw in God’s eyes because of Jesus’ death and resurrection.** Erase the scribble. **Now I can be secure in God’s love because I know that no matter what, Jesus loves me, and I am loved.** Use the red dry-erase marker to draw a large heart on the mirror so that it frames your face when you look into it. Show it to the kids. **And so are you!**

Play worship music from the [Faith Begins with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as you hand out paper towels and invite kids to use them to erase what they wrote or drew on their mirrors. Next pass around the red permanent markers and encourage kids to take turns drawing a heart with permanent marker along the outside edge of their mirrors.

As you take your mirrors home today, I encourage you to set them somewhere you will see often. And every time you see the heart framing your reflection, remember today’s Wonder Truth: Because Jesus loves me, I am loved! Invite kids to repeat the Wonder Truth after you.

Optional Craft for younger: Water World Filters

SUPPLIES: metal baking sheets (1 per every 5 kids), paper towels, paper heart cutouts (1 per kid), coffee filters (1 per kid), blue and green washable markers (several), spray bottle, water, glue, permanent markers or pens, red construction paper (several sheets, optional), scissors (prep only, optional), cardstock (1 sheet per kid, optional)

Ahead of time, cover metal baking sheets with paper towels. If you don't have paper hearts, cut a heart from red construction paper for each kid.

Jesus loves the world with a big love, so big that Jesus died for us. Let's make something to remind us that Jesus loves the world—and that includes you and me!

Give each kid a coffee filter and encourage her to flatten it as much as possible. Tell the kids they can use a permanent marker or pen to write their names or initials on the back of the filter. Then have the kids use the blue and green washable markers to draw shapes on the other side of the filter so that it looks like the world with oceans and continents. When the filters are colored, place them on the baking sheets covered with paper towels. Use the spray bottle filled with water to mist the coffee filters. The colors should blend and look like earth. Give the coffee filters time to dry a bit before letting the kids glue a heart shape to the middle of each colored filter. If the filters get sprayed with a lot of water, it may take a while for them to dry.



You could also have the kids glue the filters to sheets of cardstock for durability and transporting home.

Take your craft home as a reminder that Jesus—who made the heavens and the earth—loves you so much!