LESSON 1

KNOWN, LOVED, LED

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: My Life Can Tell of God's Wonder!
SCRIPTURE: Genesis 12; Deuteronomy 6; Romans 5; 1 Corinthians 8, 15
GOD'S BIG STORY: God has always known, loved, and led His people. Though we haven't always followed faithfully, God has a plan to call us to Himself.
WORD OF WONDER: But whoever loves God is known by God. —1 Corinthians 8:3

- Play Stations:
  - Wonder Shapes
  - Drawing in the Sand
  - Known, Loved, Led ColoringSheet
- Curiosity Activity: Snap and Point
- Word of Wonder: 1 Corinthians 8:3
- Circle Time: Human Dominoes
- Craft: Known, Loved, Led Poster
- Snack
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: House of the Lord, Be a Light
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Game: Share the Wonder
- Responding in Worship: Wonder Wall
- Prayer and Blessing
- Closing Game: Known, Loved, LedWonder Run

INVITATION

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

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WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 8:3

Uh-oh ... preparing this Wonder Ink lesson could be a challenge.

Not because it's a tough lesson to teach, but because the Wonder Truth isn't just for your kids.

It's for you too.

You'll share with kids the truth that, because they're known, loved, and led, their lives can tell of God's wonder. At fi st glance, there's not much challenge there. Of course, you're known by God—He made you. And of course, Jesus loves you—God is love. The challenge lies in the "led" part of the lesson.

Because you're only led if you're actually following.

Today you'll touch on a few of the many times God's people lived defiantly ather than follow God's leading, which raises the question: Where do you fit into that nar ative?

Are you a fan of Jesus ... or a follower?

Following Jesus isn't a one-and-done decision. It happens hourly as you choose how to handle confli ts, do a job, or spend a paycheck.

We point this out not to wag a finger our direction but to remind you that we're praying for you ... and your kids. We're praying your lives will declare God's wonder because you're following Jesus faithfully, sharing His love joyfully, and enjoying His presence constantly.

And we ask that you pray for us too.

We're on this journey of faith and discipleship together—and what a joy it is to travel with you.

—Mikal Keefer
Children's Ministry Volunteer
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?
After meeting the risen Jesus, Paul became an apostle with a special mission to Gentiles (Gal 2:9). Paul, a Pharisee skilled in the interpretation of Israel's Scripture, teaches that God welcomes Jews and Gentiles alike, welcomes all who have faith.

WHAT?
Paul has a complex response to a social dilemma for Gentiles, whether Christians should avoid eating meat offered to idols in pagan ceremonies. Paul agrees that idols have no real existence (1 Cor 8:4), but he cares about any potential for misunderstanding.

WHERE?
Paul first established the church in Corinth (modern-day Greece), and his letters show that he exchanged correspondence with them and planned future visits (1 Cor 5:9; 16:5–9). The congregation of Corinth had many problems and divisions, as it was made up of recent converts from paganism.

WHEN?
The Corinthian church was founded during Paul's missionary travels (Acts 18:1, 11). Paul probably died in Rome before 65 AD, which makes 1 Corinthians likely to have been composed in the 50s. First Corinthians became especially well-known among Christians in the first and second centuries.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY
Paul saw the many difficulties within the Corinthian church, but he hoped their faith would be a testimony of God's covenant faithfulness. We know that the same God made a covenant with Abraham, came to earth as Jesus, and leads through the Holy Spirit. The one and only God had a plan all along!

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

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Play Stations

SUPPLIES: play dough (a few different colors), various shapes of dough cutters, sand, baking sheet or bin, coloring utensils, towel or tarp (optional), kinetic sand (optional)
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Known, Loved, Led Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly xplain 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: Wonder Shapes

Set up: Set out play dough and various shapes of cutters.

Play: Encourage the kids to shape the play dough into hearts or any shape that allows them to share or see God's wonder. It may be helpful for you to share examples of things they can make, such as hearts, people, the world, various things in nature, a Bible, or a happy face.

Play Station: Drawing in the Sand

Set up: Set out a baking sheet or bin with a layer of sand. To keep the mess contained, you can set out a tarp or towel under the baking sheet. Instead of regular sand, you can also use kinetic sand.

Play: Encourage kids to draw pictures in the sand to show God's wonder. There are no right or wrong responses in this activity. The kids can draw anything that makes them think of how wonderful and amazing God is!

Play Station: Known, Loved, Led Coloring Sheet

Set up: Print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of someone who knows and loves them.

Curiosity Activity: Snap and Point

Make It Inclusive: For kids with hearing impairments, stand closer and make the sound louder or let them do the clapping rather than the listening.

We can tell where a sound starts by listening with our ears. When we close our eyes and sounds come to both our ears at the same time, it's harder for us to figu e out where the sound starts. Let's do an activity to see if we can figu e out where a sound started. Choose one kid to sit with eyes tightly closed while you stand behind him.

I'm going to snap my Ānger, and the person sitting down will listen and point to where the sound started.

Start by snapping or clapping while standing a few feet away from the kid. Then snap or clap near alternating ears and also in front of the kid and behind the kid's ear. Each time you snap or clap, encourage the kid to point to where the sound started. Then carefully snap along a line that runs directly over the kid's head, front to back, equidistant from each ear.

Soon, the guesses will occasionally be wildly inaccurate. **It was hard to tell where the sound was coming from! Not many people can accurately pinpoint the origin of a sound if it reaches both ears at precisely the same time.**

After watching your demonstration, have kids get in smaller groups and try the experiment with a leader clapping and snapping.

When we don't know who we're following or whose voice we're listening to, we may go the wrong way. God gives us the Holy Spirit to lead us and help us become like Jesus! We can listen for Him and let Him lead us so our lives can tell of His wonder! We'll learn more about that today.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, loor tape (optional)
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Word of Wonder Jump Sheets (1 set per group)

WORD OF WONDER

But whoever loves God is known by God.

—1 Corinthians 8:3

Ahead of time, print one set of the Word of Wonder Jump Sheets for every small group of kids.

Our verse for the Known, Loved, Led series is 1 Corinthians 8:3: "But whoever loves God is known by God." Encourage the kids to say the verse with you.

The verse reminds us we're known by God. That means we belong. You're made in His image, as His child. God knows me. Jesus loves me. The Holy Spirit leads me. God's amazing story changes my own. My story can show what God is like and how He's working in my life.

When I choose to join God's amazing story, my story changes. I get to follow Jesus and listen to His Spirit. Because of God's story, I get to know who I truly am and who I was made to be—a wonder-fille example of God to the world.

Leader Tip: It's great when kids know the words of a passage—but it's far more important for them to understand the meaning. Debriefing with questions is one way to ensure understanding; don't skimp on the time you spend with questions!

Set out one set of the Word of Wonder sheets for each small group of kids. Lay them on the floor in order, close enough for kids to jump from one paper to another. If your floor is slippery, tape the papers to the floor using floor tape.

Encourage the kids to take turns jumping from paper to paper as you all say the verse together, saying one word at a time as a kid lands on each paper.

God is Creator of all. God is good, and He created us in His own image. We're known by God. Remember that God made you on purpose for a purpose, and He wants a relationship with you.

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

- **BUT WHOEVER—***Spread one arm out in front of you, palm up, toward others in the room.*
- **LOVES—***Put your hands over your heart.*
- **GOD—***Point up.*
- **IS KNOWN—***Point to your head.*
- **BY GOD.—***Point up.*
- **1 CORINTHIANS 8:3—***Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **What's something you want to be sure God knows about you?**
- **If you love God, why? What is it about God that you love?**

Circle Time: Human Dominoes

SUPPLIES: dominoes or wooden blocks (optional)

Gather the kids and have them stand in a circle.

Have you ever played with dominoes? Pause for answers. **When you line up dominoes next to each other and then push the fi st one over, they all fall—one at a time, down the line. This is a chain reaction. It reminds me of the chain reaction we're learning about today. When we're known by God, loved by Jesus, and led by the Holy Spirit … Our lives can tell of God's wonder! We can cause a reaction in others when our lives share God's wonder!**

Let's make our own chain reaction and pretend to fall like dominoes. I'll point to one person to be the leader, and that person will pretend to fall while saying, "My life can tell of God's wonder!" Then the next person will pretend to fall and say the phrase, until everyone in the circle has had a chance. Be careful not to fall into someone else.

Point to the kids in the circle and encourage them to pretend to fall (or actually fall down). If you have dominoes (or wooden blocks), let the kids set them up in a line and take turns knocking them over.

Leader Tip: For younger kids, point to each kid when it's time to fall.

This is one chain reaction that can spread all over the world! Your life can tell of God's wonder!

When the kids finish the domino a tivity, ask questions from the list.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who, besides God and your family, knows you best?**
- **Who, besides God and your family, do you think loves you?**
- **What have you done lately that tells of God's wonder?**
- **How does Jesus show He loves you?**
- **If you love God, why? What do you love about God?**
- **What's one way you show God that you love Him?**
- **What's one way you can share God's wonder with someone?**

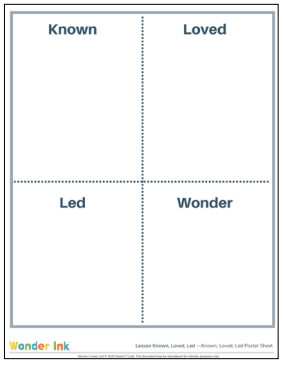
Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for knowing us, loving us, and leading us. God hears all our prayers!

Craft: Known, Loved, Led Poster

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Known, Loved, Led Poster Sheet (1 per kid);"Who Y ou Say I Am" from the Known, Led, Loved Early Childhood Spotify playlist

Before kids arrive, print a Known, Loved, Led Poster Sheet for each kid.



Set out coloring utensils. Encourage the kids to draw in each box according to the prompt. As they draw, play the song "Who You Say I Am" from the Known, Led, Loved Early Childhood Spotify playlist.

In the boxes, invite the kids to draw ...

- **Known: Something God knows about you**
- **Loved: A way Jesus shows His love for you**
- **Led: A way the Holy Spirit has led you**
- **Wonder: A way your life can show God's wonder**

Because God knows you, Jesus loves you, and the Holy Spirit leads you, you get to be a wonder-. lled re ection of God to the world. The Bible tells us that we're fearfully and wonderfully made, knit together by a loving God who knows all about us and loves every inch of us. He delights in us, and we can celebrate His wonder!

Here is what we can remember: I get to be part of God's story, and my life tells of God's wonder. Take your pictures home as a reminder that you're known, led, and loved, and your life can tell of God's wonder!

Snack

Instruct kids to sit in the floor. Pass out snacks and say a prayer together.

Invite kids to repeat after you:

You know me, lead me, and love me too. kids repeat

Please help me follow You. kids repeat

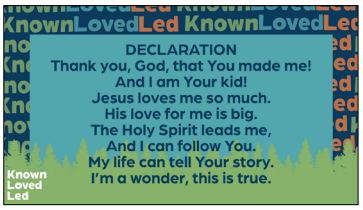
Thank You for snacks so yummy. kids repeat

That fill my happy tummy! kids repeat

Amen

Declaring God's Wonder

Show the Early Childhood Declaration Slide and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Make prayer hands, then point up and then to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
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 words and motions.)*
Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands up, shake your finge s, and celebrate ("praise hands").

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, it's wonderful to be known and loved by You. Through Your Holy Spirit, You're always bringing us closer to You and shaping our lives. Help us hear from You today. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Today we'll learn about how we're known by God, loved by Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit, and our lives can tell of God's wonder. Let's sing about it! We can praise God as we declare that we're known, loved, and led, and we can share God's wonder!

Play House of the Lord, Be a Light and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

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? *(Hold your hands together, open your palms, as if opening a book.)*

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

Let's start by reading part of God's big story from the Bible. We're going to read verses from both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Read the God's Big Story Script provided

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

You're about to perform the play Known, Loved, and Led. Your job is to make faces that show the emotions of the characters mentioned in the story. For instance, if I say, "sad," you'll show me your best sad faces. Do that now! Pause for kids to show their best sad faces and you do the same.

And now, show those sad, boo-hoo faces to the people around you. Pause for kids to show each other their sad faces.

Excellent! I'll give you a thumbs-up signal when it's time to put on your best emotion faces, and we'll pause so you can show those faces to others.

Leader Tip: It pays to leave your dignity at the door when teaching kids. When you dive into an experience, you're inviting kids to join you there. If you lead the way, you'll get far greater participation than if you simply tell kids to do something that you won't do yourself. So have fun!

A long time ago, lots of people did not worship the one true God. These people chose to worship fake gods instead. Because these people believed in fake gods, they did not listen to the one true God. People disobeyed God and made wrong choices. Show your sad faces. Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond. **This is what we call sin. God knew people would choose to sin, and He had a plan to fix i .**

God's plan included a promise to a man named Abraham. God told Abraham, "I'm going to bless your family. And your family will help bless the whole world!" To bless means to give a special gift to the world. That's happy. Show your happy faces. Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond. **God kept His promise. God blessed Abraham with a big family. Abraham's family became God's people.**

God gave Abraham's family a special prayer to help them remember who He is: "The LORD is our God. The LORD is the one and only God" (Deuteronomy 6:4b)**. This meant that they were not to worship any other gods.**

But even Abraham's family did not always listen to God. Sometimes they worshiped the one true God. And sometimes they worshiped fake gods. Abraham's family made wrong choices. They didn't always show God to the world like they should have. Ugh. That's disappointing and sad. Show your sad faces again. Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond.

But God did not give up on His people. He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a human. Jesus was even born from Abraham's family! While Jesus was on earth, He showed us what God is like and how much God loves everyone. So happy! Show happy and amazed faces! Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond. **Jesus taught people, helped people, and did amazing things. He also never sinned. Then Jesus died on a cross for our sins even though He did not deserve the punishment. Very sad. Show very sad faces.** Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond.

But guess what? Jesus did not stay dead! He came back to life! By rising from the dead, Jesus shows that He has defeated sin and death and made the way for us to be saved from our sins. Jesus is alive now! When we trust in Jesus and follow Him, we can say this special prayer:

"There is only one God. He is the Father. All things came from him, and we live because of him" (1 Corinthians 8:6)**. Because of Jesus, sin and death don't win. Jesus wins! That's exciting and wonderful! Show amazed and cheerful faces.** Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond.

The power of the Holy Spirit brought Jesus back to life. Now God sends the Holy Spirit to everyone who trusts in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence. And the Holy Spirit wants every person to know why God made them. Everyone is made by God, and everyone is special to God. The Holy Spirit leads us when we follow Jesus. When we're known by God, loved by Jesus, and led by the Spirit, we can live the way God wants. We can tell the world how wonderful God is! Show faces that share joy and love. Give a thumbs-up and allow the kids to respond.

Because I am known, loved, and led, my life can tell of God's wonder.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

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

Our Wonder Truth today is MY LIFE CAN TELL OF GOD'S WONDER. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

We know that the same God who called Abraham came to earth as Jesus and also leads us through the Holy Spirit. God is three persons, but the one and only God had a plan for us all along. When we choose to follow Jesus, we're led by His Spirit and can tell the world of His wonder!

Prayer and Blessing

Ask kids to look at the wall and join you in saying the Word of Wonder aloud—while joining in on the motions. Remind kids that they're known, loved, and led by God, and they can know and love God as well.

Let's pray and talk to God and thank Him for how He knows us, loves us, and leads us.

God, thank You for Your great love for us. Thank You for knowing us and giving us the Holy Spirit to lead us. Lead us to become more like You and share Your wonder every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: God knows you, through and through. He loves you with a love that's deep, wide, and strong—stronger than life itself. May God help you always follow Him joyfully, today and all your days. Go with God and let your life share His wonder with the world.

Game: Share the Wonder

Let's play a game to help us think about how we can share God's wonder through our lives! What do you think it means to help others to know Jesus too? Allow the kids to respond. **When you're led by the Holy Spirit, He can lead you to share His story with others so they can know about God. Is it easy for you to follow?** Allow the kids to respond. **Is it easy for you to lead others?** Allow the kids to respond. **Let's practice leading, following, and sharing in this game.**

Have the kids form two lines and stand together on one side of the room. Whisper instructions to the first kid in each line and encourage that kid to follow the directions without talking. The next kid in line will follow the directions of the first kid without hearing the specific instructions—the kid will only know what to do by watching and following the example of the first kid. Each kid in line will do the same. To make it harder, have all the kids close their eyes or turn their backs, except the next kid in line and the kid following the directions.

Use the following directions or make up your own:

- **Crawl to the other end of the room and back.**
- **Walk with a toy on your head to the other end of the room and back.**
- **Pretend to build a tower with invisible bricks.**
- **Pretend to drive a race car in a race around the room and end back at your line.**
- **Pretend you're walking at the zoo, looking at animals.**
- **Do the hokeypokey in the middle of the room.**

At the end, thefirst kid can act out the original instructions while all the kids watch.

While it may have been hard to lead or follow in this game, God gives us help as we follow Him each day! When we follow God, He gives us the Holy Spirit to lead us. As we're led by the Spirit, we can share God's story with others. You get to be a part of God's story and tell of His wonder!

Let's play the game again! But this time, when it's your turn to follow directions, think of one way your life can share God's wonder and act it out!