

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 15:11c

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

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Contributor to Wonder Ink

JESUS LOVES THE WORLD

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 is and 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.



Small Group

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

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Play Stations... Ice Breaker (or can save for the end of small group!)

What You Need – SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, [Jesus Loves the World Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

What You Do - Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

What You Say - Welcome to small group! While we're coloring, let's go around the circle, tell everyone your name and someone in the world that you love.

Play Station: Jesus Loves the World Coloring Sheet

Set up: Print one copy per kid of the [coloring sheet](#) and set out the coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of something (or someone) in the world that they love.

Curiosity Activity: Love Ball

SUPPLIES: marker (prep only), large bouncy ball, heart-shaped stickers (optional)

Ahead of time, use a marker to draw hearts on the bouncy ball (or put heart-shaped stickers on it).

Gather the kids together and show them the ball with hearts on it. **This is a “love ball.” We’re going to carefully toss it to each other. When you catch it, you get to name something or someone you love.**

You might say, “I love my mommy” or “I love my teddy bear.” Then you will pass it to someone else! Allow the kids to pass the ball to one another while naming someone (or something) they love. Continue until every kid has had a turn.

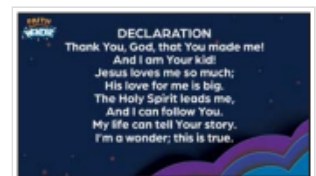
We love our family and our friends. We might even love cookies and snacks, but not in the same way we love our families. Did you know that someone loves you with a very special love? In today’s part of God’s big story, we’re going to find out how very much Jesus loves you and me!

Leader Tip: It’s hard for some kids to think on the spot, so they might just repeat what the kid before them said. Don’t force them to come up with something unique. However, if the whole group starts copying each other, encourage them to think of something new. If necessary, pause the game so kids can think for a moment.

Declaring God’s Wonder

What You Need – Early Childhood Declaration [Slide](#)

What You Do - 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 fingers, and celebrate (“praise hands”).



Belief

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

Prayer of Invitation

What You Do - Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words:

What You Say - God, You love us and do wonderful things for us! Holy Spirit, please fill us with wonder at how amazing You are. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God's Big Story

What You Need – SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them that today's story comes from two books of the Bible: Colossians and John. Open a Bible and show them where one of the passages is found.

• **Bible Time Rhyme** **this is super cute!!!**

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, then 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 books of Colossians and John.

Read [Colossians 1:15–23](#) and [John 3:16–17](#) from the Bible.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

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

What You Say - Our Wonder Truth today is **BECAUSE JESUS LOVES ME, I AM LOVED**.
Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

Jesus died and came back to life. The same God who created all things beat death and sin. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that isn't what God wants. Sin keeps us far from God. But with Jesus, we can be close to God and can be forgiven. God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to earth so we can be forgiven.

Word of Wonder

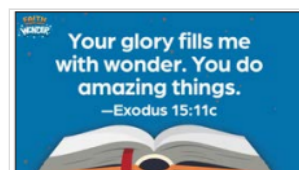
What You Need – SUPPLIES: Bible, Word of Wonder [Slide](#)

WORD OF WONDER

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

—Exodus 15:11c

Show the Word of Wonder [Slide](#).



What You Say - 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.)



Faith

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Circle Time: Ball Pass

SUPPLIES: ball, a way to quietly play upbeat worship music (leader can use your phone! Any appropriate & upbeat song works.)

What You Do - Gather the kids to sit in a circle and show them the ball.

What You Say - 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 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. (Some kids may be nervous about answer a question. Encourage them & help them out as you see needed!)

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.

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.

Game: Story Scavenger Hunt

What You Need – Timeline Images

What You Do - Before you begin, hide the [Timeline Images](#) from God's Big Story around your room. Invite kids to find each picture, then bring them back to a central location to put them in order. (There's not a great place to hide these in the large room. Just place them around the space and have kids take turns going to retrieve one.)



What You Say - In today's part of God's big story, we discovered that **because Jesus loves us, we are loved. We know that Jesus loves us because He made the world, He died and rose again, and He's the King over everything. There are some story pictures hiding around our room. When I say, "Go," you can look for them. If you find a picture, bring it back here, and we'll put all the pictures in order. Ready, set, go!** (Or send them one at a time)

Give kids time to find the hidden images and then bring them back to a central place. Invite the kids to recall what each image means from the God's Big Story time.

This is the order of the pictures and a reminder of what each image means:

1. Creation—God made people.
2. Heart—God loves people. Because Jesus loves me, I am loved.
3. Sin—People made wrong choices and disobeyed God.
4. Jesus Dies and Rises Again—Because He loves us, Jesus died and came back to life.
5. Jesus as King—Jesus is God and made all things. He's the King over everything.



Identity

Create space for God to remind kids that they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Responding in Worship: Jesus Loves Poster

What You Need – SUPPLIES: marker, butcher paper or posterboard, coloring utensils, stickers (optional)

What You Do - Ahead of time, use a marker to draw a large heart shape in the middle of a large sheet of butcher paper or posterboard. Write "Jesus Loves the World" in large letters on the poster. Gather kids together and show them the poster.

What You Say - What shape do we use to remind us of love? Invite kids to respond. **Yes, a heart! In our story today, we learned that Jesus loves us so much He died so we can be forgiven for our sins—the wrong things we say and do. Together we're going to make a poster that reminds us of Jesus' love. This poster says, "Jesus Loves the World." I'm so glad Jesus loves the world because that means Jesus loves you and me.**

Let's add some other things to our poster. You can draw something that Jesus loves, like a picture of the world. Or you can write your name because Jesus loves you! You could also draw a crown to remind us that Jesus is King over everything.

Give kids time to decorate the poster. If you want, you can also provide stickers of heart shapes or other shapes or pictures that correspond with the passage, like a globe or cross. Remind the kids that Jesus loves the world.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for His love.

God, thank You for loving us with Your big love! Holy Spirit, help us really know deep down inside what it means to be loved by You. 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.

Blessing: May you feel the love of God this week. May you know deep down inside how much Jesus loves you.