

LESSON 3

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Loves Us

SCRIPTURE: [Mark 10](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: Jesus welcomes little children, taking them in His arms and blessing them. He teaches that His kingdom belongs to those who are like little children.

WORD OF WONDER: God so loved the world. He gave His one and only Son. —[from John 3:16](#)

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

During the time of Jesus, children entered adulthood around age 12. Girls would plan for marriage, and boys would either continue studying the Torah (Jewish Scriptures) or enter into their father's trade. The children who came to Jesus would probably have been fairly young.

WHAT?

The disciples were likely trying to protect Jesus' time so He could teach and heal those who they deemed important. But Jesus makes it clear that people must accept the kingdom of God like little children, who realize it is a gift from God, not something that can be gained through worldly knowledge or wisdom.

WHERE?

Jesus was in southern Israel and across the Jordan River. He was surrounded by crowds, including some of the Pharisees, who were constantly testing Jesus because they were suspicious of His teachings. He wasn't necessarily in friendly territory—His teachings and actions were being closely watched.

WHEN?

Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem for the final time—it is there He would eventually face His death. After welcoming the children, Jesus continued to teach about the kingdom of God and how it operates in ways opposite the world.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Shortly before Jesus blessed the children in [Mark 10](#), He took a child in His arms and taught that welcoming little children in His name is the same as welcoming Him (see [Mark 9:33–37](#)). Multiple times during His ministry, Jesus cared for children, noticing, healing, and blessing them.

Activity: Heart Mirrors

Ahead of time, use a dry-erase marker to draw a big heart on the mirror so the kids can see their own faces inside the heart when they look in the mirror. As the kids arrive, greet them warmly and welcome them to church.

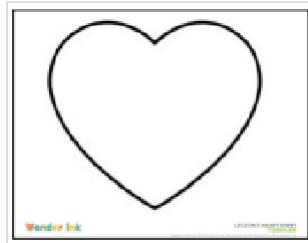
Welcome! Today we're going to talk about when Jesus spent time with children and told everyone something very important! Can you see yourself in the mirror? What do you see?

Have each kid look at her reflection in the mirror. Let them make funny faces at themselves or spot other things behind them. Ask each kid what she sees.

Point the mirror at different things or people in the room and ask the kids to shout out what they see in the mirror. If the mirror reflects a person, have the kids shout, “Jesus loves me!”

Activity: Decorate a Heart

Ahead of time, print enough copies of the [Heart Sheet](#) for each kid to have one. Let the kids use coloring utensils or stickers to decorate the hearts.



In God's big story today, Jesus spends time with kids. He lets everybody know that kids have a special place in His heart! Let's create a colorful heart to remind us of Jesus' love!

These hearts look amazing! Let's talk more about who Jesus loves a lot ... Our Wonder Truth today is: JESUS LOVES US. It's us! He loves you so much. We'll learn about it today.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

JESUS—*Hands out to your sides (a cross).*

LOVES—*Hands over your hearts.*

US—*Point to yourself.*

Prayer and Blessing

Let's talk to God. While I pray, put your hands on your heart to remember how much God loves you.
Invite the kids to put their hands on their hearts.

God, we thank You for loving us so much. Thank You for wanting to know us and spend time with us.
Help us always remember how much You love us. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands 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: **May you remember Jesus is always with you wherever you go. He loves you always, no matter what! May every step you take in life move you closer to Him, and may your lives show others how much Jesus loves them!**

Activity: Jesus Loves Me!

Ahead of time, cut out a paper heart and place it on the floor. Tell the kids to sit on the other side of the room and show them the heart on the floor. Take turns calling out each kid's name and encouraging them to pop up when they hear their name. When you call their name, they can go to the heart, jump or step on it, and say, "Jesus loves me!" then go back to sit down.

Jesus cares about you so much. He cares when you're happy, sad, or upset. He blessed the children in the story today, and that means He reminded them how much He loves them. Today we learned that Jesus will always make time for kids, and He knows you're very special. Remember, Jesus loves you!