Children’s Sermon – “The Wall”

Hi kids. I think we all know that sometimes bad things happen in this world despite the fact that we have a loving God that looks over us. We make bad choices at times that hurt us, and others make bad choices that hurt us. In general, there is a lot of brokenness in relationships that can cause a lot of damage.

So, we learn how to protect ourselves. Just like castles have BIG walls or thick walls, we build walls around our hearts. While we still feel hurt from time to time, by building a wall and keeping people out of our hearts (and away from how we are truly feeling), we stay safe. We survive.

Think about a time where you may have built a wall to protect your heart. Think about the feeling or problem you had. You probably want God’s help to help you work this out so that the wall can come down.

But something unfortunate can happen. We find someone that we want to let into our hearts. They show us love and care and grace in ways we hadn’t experienced from others. That sounds good, right? But you know what the unfortunate part is?

The walls we used to protect us from bad things getting in and hurting our hearts can also keep good things out. We can’t let our parents/guardians, our teachers, our friends, or our counselors… whoever it might be… into our hearts to see them as they really are: hurting, broken, but desperately wanting love and acceptance. That’s more than unfortunate… it’s terrible!

So, we might get frustrated that the wall keeps them out, and they might get frustrated too, because they see our need and want to meet it, but can’t ever get in. So, we fear it is all going to turn out awful. Maybe that person we want to let in gets so fed up being on the other side of the wall that they leave… and we hurt again and tell ourselves:

*“Well, that was dumb of me! I just thought about taking my wall–my defenses–down, and look what it got me. Nothing but more hurt and pain.”*

So, we build another layer to the wall… we make it **thicker** and **stronger**.

This seems like a real story, doesn’t it? Maybe this is your story?

But, there is another story, that if considered, just might make all the difference. That story is the story of God’s love shown to us through Jesus. Jesus came to show us a better way. It was so important to him that we understand God’s love that he was willing to be put to death by the angry people that couldn’t accept what he was saying about God! And, miracle of all miracles, Jesus rose from the grave on Easter morning, giving us hope that nothing ever has to separate us from God’s love.

Consider what the Jesus follower named Paul, who once had a REALLY big wall up between himself and others, wrote about the love of God he had come to understand and experience:

*“So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn’t hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn’t gladly and freely do for us? …Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ’s love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins…*

*I’m absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely****nothing****can get between us and God’s love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.* [Romans 8:32-39, The Message]

But, what about that wall? If nothing can separate us from God’s love… that wall is going to have to come down. We can start by letting Jesus in, and together, working with God to remove the wall brick by brick until we can let others in, too.**We built the wall, but it’s too strong for us to tear down on our own.** We need help. We need God’s help. And, God wants to help us, but we have to ask him.

Let’s close our time by writing things down on our “bricks” [wooden blocks that you have with you] and build a wall.

(Here is what a few of the children may be thinking and you can use these as examples):

*“Lord, help me talk about my feelings.”*

*“I’ve been hurt MANY times.”*

*“CONTROL.”*

*“I am afraid of loving people.”*

 Once the wall is built, pray a prayer, and push the wall over together.

Then you can close with this optional prayer:

*“Lord, help these children who–in order to survive–have built walls around their hearts that are now keeping out the very people they need to let in. Strengthen them to do the hard work of sharing their feelings, help them learn what a healthy relationship looks like, and may they come to a place where they can both experience and express the love they so desire. Meet them right where they are, Lord, and help them accept your love and grace. Amen.”*