



Dear Pastor,

A warm hello from GEMS Girls' Clubs! We are thankful for you and your club. We count it a humble privilege to partner with you in discipling girls to become faithful followers of Jesus!

Each year is something we call GEMS Sunday—a special day to celebrate the girls and women in your GEMS Club. It's a great opportunity to let your congregation know what takes place at GEMS while providing girls with leadership opportunities in intergenerational worship. This includes sharing the theme studied in GEMS Clubs throughout the year. GEMS Sunday can be scheduled for April 26, May 3, or another date of your choosing.

This year's theme is *LOVED. Period. That is what we are!* The theme verse is 1 John 3:1, *See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*

Please connect with your Club Coordinator to put plans for your GEMS Sunday in place. Access the children's bulletin and litany from gemsgc.org/loved-period, and order bulletin covers from the GEMS Global Office. Following this letter, you will find more details about the *LOVED.* theme.

Finally, I would love to know how we can serve you and your club better. Send me an email or give me a call. I would count it a joy if you would introduce yourself and tell me about your GEMS Club!

May your GEMS Sunday bless you and all those worshipping with you!

Serving Him Together,

A handwritten signature in pink ink that reads "Cindy" followed by a stylized heart shape containing a smiley face.

Cindy Bultema
GEMS Executive Director
cindy@gemsgc.org
(616) 241-5616, ext. 2

Theme Logo

The *LOVED.* logo can be downloaded from the LOVED. Online Resources. As God's children, we can know we are LOVED. Period. This is God's Word of Truth, and provides healing and hope for anyone who has put question marks where God places a period. We are LOVED. no matter what!

Theme Song

"Live Like You're Loved" by Hawk Nelson, performed by Colleen and Grace.

GEMS Sunday

GEMS Sunday is scheduled for April 26 or May 3, 2020. (These are suggested dates only. Please feel free to schedule it for any date that works for you.)

Bulletin Cover or Insert, Litany, and Children's Bulletin

Full color, theme-related GEMS Girls' Clubs bulletin covers are packaged in quantities of 100 and available in two sizes, 8 ½ x 11 and 8 ½ x 14, for a nominal cost. A bulletin insert is also available in quantities of 100. This 5.5 x 8.5 insert has the same information as the bulletin cover. Bulletin covers and inserts can be ordered from the GEMS Global Office. For reproducible copies of our LOVED. Period. That is what we are! children's bulletin, litany, and the litany via PowerPoint, download from gemsgc.org/loved-period.

LOVED.

Our greatest desire is to be loved (Proverbs 19:22). No matter who you are or where you are in your story, we share the same insatiable desire. We desire love. And true love can only be found in one source—God. God is love. It's who He is; it's what He does!

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1).

When we understand that God deeply loves us, no matter what, everything changes. We discover who He is and who we really are in Him. We learn our true identity! Because our beliefs shape our behavior, it's only when we know we are LOVED. that we will live LOVED. From the overflow of His great love, we will love God, ourselves, and others.

Theme Verse

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1).

Theme Outline

One word can change everything. After you hear girls or an entire congregation sing, "Jesus Loves Me This I Know" ask two questions.

1. Does Jesus love you?

Then add one word to the question.



2. Does Jesus love you? Period.

Dannah Gresch, author of *Lies Girls Believe*, surveyed over 1,500 tween girls. The vast majority of these 7-12-year old girls considered themselves to be Christians. So when they were asked, “Does God love you?” Good news! 92% said yes!

So these girls know they are LOVED. Period., right? LOVED. no matter what?

Sadly, no. Gresch writes in *A Mom’s Guide to Lies Girls Believe*, “The majority of the girls knew God loved them, but their responses revealed a lack of confidence in His love when they sinned.” In other words, God loved them if they obeyed. God loved them if they followed all the rules!

While adding one little word if to God’s great love may not seem like a big deal, it is. It’s a lie! A lie that leaves girls who sing, “Jesus Loves Me This I Know” just as empty and lost as the girls who never sing the song at all.

Look in Scripture

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! 1 John 3:1

See God’s great love. *See what great love the Father has lavished on us* (1 John 3:1).

- God’s love is with us. *Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life* (Psalm 23:6).
- God’s love does not fail. *Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail* (Lamentations 3:22).
- God’s love is unconditional. *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8).
- God’s love is never-ending and never-stopping. *Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!* (Psalm 66:20)
- God’s love has a name. His name is Jesus. *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16).
- God’s love invites us to be part of His family. Share the Gospel. There may be GEMS Grown-Ups and friends who have never heard what it means to receive God’s love through Jesus and belong to Him!

See your new identity. *That we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!* 1 John 3:1

In Christ, we have a new identity and new names. Note: Your GEMS and their leaders were challenged to memorize these names and Scripture verses from A to Z.

- **Accepted.** *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God* (Romans 15:7).
- **Beautiful.** *You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you* (Song of Songs 4:7).
- **Chosen.** *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last* (John 15:16).



- **Delighted in.** *He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me* (Psalm 18:19).
- **Enough.** *His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness* (2 Peter 1:3).
- **Free.** *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free* (Galatians 5:1).
- **Gifted.** *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others* (1 Peter 4:10).
- **Heaven-bound.** *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ* (Philippians 3:20).
- **Important.** *And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows* (Matthew 10:30-31).
- **Jewel.** *They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown* (Zechariah 9:16).
- **Known.** *You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar* (Psalm 139:1-2).
- **LOVED.** *See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!* (1 John 3:1)
- **Masterpiece.** *For we are God's masterpiece* (Ephesians 2:10, NLT).
- **New creation.** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!* (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- **Overcomer.** *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world* (1 John 4:4).
- **Protected.** *But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one* (2 Thessalonians 3:3).
- **Qualified.** *And giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light* (Colossians 1:12).
- **Rescued.** *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins* (Colossians 1:13-14).
- **Strong.** *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go* (Joshua 1:9).
- **Temple.** *Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
- **Unique.** *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb* (Psalm 139:13).
- **Victorious.** *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Corinthians 15:57).
- **Washed.** *Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow* (Psalm 51:7).
- **eXample.** *In everything set them an example by doing what is good* (Titus 2:7).

- **Young but able.** *Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4:12).*
- **Zealous.** *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord (Romans 12:11).*

See how to live LOVED.

Listen. There is sensory overload from all the voices clamoring for our ear. These voices come from influencers and YouTubers, friends and frenemies, self-talk, and all the places the enemy tempts us to hold our emptiness up to something or someone else to fill us. With each voice we need to ask, “Is this a lie or is this Truth?”

Look in God's Word. God's Word is Truth! (John 17:17) The Bible tells us who God is, all He says about us, and how much we are LOVED. Because here's the good news girls heard throughout the season: Lies can't stick to Truth-filled girls!

Live LOVED. When we train ourselves to tune our ear to God's Voice of Truth and to see what God actually says about Himself and us, we will live LOVED. Our beliefs shape our behavior. What we behold—what we see—is who we become. It determines how we live. Those who understand that they are LOVED., will live LOVED. And others will come to know that Jesus loves them, too! Period.

Possible Object Lessons and Other Message Enhancements

1. Challenge your congregation to memorize 1 John 3:1 or one or more of their Truth-filled A to Z identity names and corresponding Bible verses. Or ask the GEMS to teach them!
2. Challenge your congregation to journal all the places they see God's love in His Word, His world, and their own lives. This takes great effort and discipline, but opens our eyes to see God's great love!
3. Distribute nametags that contain identity names that are ours in Christ. All the nametags could read, “LOVED.” Or put a different name on each nametag. Use the 26 A to Z names from the list and add more names from God's Word, if desired. Nametags could be placed in an offering basket and given as a reverse offering, placed under the seats, or girls can distribute as people leave the service. Encourage everyone to wear those nametags during the coffee hour as a way to remind each other of their true identity. Plus, they make great conversation starters!
4. Be available! Either during the service or afterward, make yourself (or a team) available to pray with anyone who wants to learn more about Jesus.
5. Invite girls to read other verses they studied in the LOVED. curriculum or ask them to share what they learned about God's love and their Truth-filled identity.
6. Allow girls to participate fully in various elements of leading the worship service—reading Scripture, singing the theme song with (or without) creative movements, serving as greeters, offering prayer, or giving personal testimony.