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a resource in:

Sunday School

Forgiveness Lessons Elementary School



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Forgiveness

Lesson 1 - God's Example of Forgiveness

Recommended Age/Class: **Elementary School** (3rd-5th grade)

Lesson Objectives:

1. The student will understand God forgives us of our sin, through Christ's death on the cross, although we did not deserve it.
2. The student will understand that God forgives us so we can have a relationship with Him as our Father and live with Him in heaven someday.
3. The student will understand that God offers forgiveness to all, but not everyone will accept this gift.

Scripture:

John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should no perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"

Related Bible Stories:

- The First Sin in the Garden of Eden (*Genesis 3*)
- Jesus' Crucifixion (*Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19*)
- The Prodigal Son (*Luke 15:11-32*)

Content:

- Sin separates us from God (e.g. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden).
- We cannot clean up our own sin.
- Sin demands payment and Christ's death on the cross paid for all sin.
- Forgiveness releases us from sin. God forgives us through Christ's death on the cross.
- God forgives us so we can be His child and He can be our Father.
- God offers forgiveness to all people for all sin, but not everyone will accept this gift of forgiveness.

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Discussion Questions:

1. What does sin do to our relationship with God?
2. How did Adam and Eve pay for their sin in the Garden of Eden?
3. How do we pay for our sin if we don't come to God for forgiveness?
4. What was required to pay for our sin?
5. Why does God want to forgive us, even when we may have done very bad things?
6. Will everyone be forgiven of their sin and go to heaven? Why or why not?

Activity:

1. The Power of Jesus' Blood: (Materials needed: paper, markers (light pink, yellow, and peach), red cellophane).
 - a. Have students write with the markers things God has told us not to do (i.e. disobeying parents, stealing, lying, etc.) on the piece of paper.
 - b. Discuss how Jesus died on the cross for our sin as payment for them and that His blood gives us salvation.
 - c. Lay the red cellophane over the paper and see how the writing "disappears."
 - d. Discuss how Jesus' blood "cleans" our hearts and God chooses to ignore the sin we had done as though it did not happen.
2. Object Lesson: (Materials needed: Etch-a-Sketch, Magic Slate, or other similar writing toy)
 - a. Have students list sins on the Etch-a-Sketch.
 - b. Have a student erase the Etch-a-Sketch.
 - c. Discuss how this represents Jesus' death and shedding of blood forgiving us of our sin. God chooses not to remember the sins that we have committed when He forgives us.

Forgiveness

Lesson 2 - God Calls Us to Forgive

Recommended Age/Class: **Elementary School** (3rd-5th grade)

Lesson Objectives:

1. The student will understand God wants us to forgive others, just as He has forgiven us through Christ's death and shed blood.
2. The student will understand we can forgive others, even if they do not ask for forgiveness.
3. The student will understand forgiveness is not easy, but God can help us.
4. The student will understand God does not want us to pay people back for hurting us.
5. The student will understand that not forgiving others can cause our own hearts to hurt from bitterness.

Scripture:

Luke 23:34, "Then said Jesus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Matthew 5:43-44, "Ye have heard it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Matthew 18:21-22, "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."

Related Bible Stories:

- Joseph Forgiving His Brothers – *Genesis 50:19-25*
- The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant - *Matthew 18:23-35*

Content:

- God wants us to forgive others, just as He forgave us through Jesus' shed blood.
- We can forgive others, even if the person who hurt us does not apologize or ask for forgiveness.
- Forgiveness is more than just saying "I forgive you." It requires us to change our thoughts and feelings about someone and what they did. This can be hard work, but God will help us if we ask Him.
- God does not want us to pay someone back for what they have done to us.
- If we choose not to forgive someone, it can hurt our own hearts by being bitter.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Jesus' death on the cross show us how we should forgive others?
2. Do people deserve to be forgiven?
3. How often should we forgive others?
4. Is it easy to forgive others? Why or why not?

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5. What have you forgiven others for? What have others forgiven you for?
6. How does the lord in the story show forgiveness? How does the servant show forgiveness? Which example is the one God wants us to follow?
7. Why does God not want us to hurt someone after they have hurt us?
8. How does choosing not to forgive someone hurt ourselves?

Activity:

1. A Clean Heart: (Materials needed: Piece of white paper, hearts to cut out, crayons)
 - a. Give each student a piece of paper and a heart shape to cut out. Have the student cut out the heart.
 - b. Have the student lightly glue (with a glue stick) the heart onto the paper. The heart will be pulled up later, so just have them lightly glue the edges.
 - c. Tell the students when people do or say things that hurt us, it can make our hearts feel bad. Have the students use a crayon to color all over the heart and unto the edges of the paper so that it is colored all around the heart. It might help to not tear the heart if they color from the middle of the heart to the outer edges.
 - d. Next, tell the students when they choose to forgive other people that hurt them, they will not feel bad about those people anymore. Have them remove the heart shape to see their “clean” heart underneath.
 - e. Have the students write a memory verse around the heart, such as one of those above or *Colossians 3:13*.
2. Not Forgiving Knots Us All Up!: (Materials needed: thin licorice or Twizzler ropes)
 - a. Read the following scenarios to the students and tell them to tie a knot in their licorice rope if they think it would make them mad or upset:
 - i. You and your brother are playing together in your room. Your brother wants the toy you have and knocks you over to get it. You hurt your arm. Tie a knot in your rope if you think this would make you mad.
 - ii. Your sister lies to your dad and tells him you did something you really did not do. Tie a knot if your rope if you think this would make you mad.
 - iii. Your friend comes over to play and doesn't help clean up the mess before going home. If this would make you mad, tie a knot in your rope.
 - b. Tell the students to look at their licorice ropes and talk about how being angry and upset at other people makes us feel “twisted” up or bad inside.
 - c. Review each story and talk about how you could forgive that person as they untie a rope. Discuss how forgiving others makes ourselves feel better as well.
3. Object Lesson: (Materials needed: backpack, heavy weights such as soup cans or small dumbbells)
 - a. Put the weights into the backpack.
 - b. Have students take turns wearing the backpack and telling how heavy it feels as they walk around the room.
 - c. Start to remove the weights and ask how it feels now. Have the students all wear the empty backpack at the end.
 - d. Discuss the following:
 - i. Holding onto things that hurt us or make us mad ends up hurting ourselves.
 - ii. Forgiving people who have hurt us makes us feel better and our own lives easier, because we don't carry around those bad feelings anymore.