

SECTION

4.4

Grace to Forgive



Introduction Activity (5 Minutes)

Option 1: Forgiveness Short Stories

What You'll Need: Nothing

STEP 1: Read one or both of the following short stories to the kids.

STORY ONE:

Andrew came home from school and put his backpack on his bed. He immediately noticed that his new Lego® set he had put together was gone.

"Sam!" he yelled as he stormed out of his room and down the hall to find his little brother. He was ready to start yelling at his brother for getting into his stuff.

Mom stepped in to settle the fight. She made Sam return the Lego set, which was now broken apart. "I'm sorry, Andrew!" Sam replied, trying to give Andrew a hug.

"I know I have to forgive you," replied Andrew with a scowl, "but you'd better NEVER come into my room or touch my stuff again!"

STORY TWO:

At dance class, Emma was trying her best to learn the new routine, but she was struggling to get the steps in the correct order.

"Look at Emma!" said Ava. She pointed at Emma and began to laugh. All of the other girls laughed too. Emma tried to ignore them, but she felt miserable for the rest of the class.

The next morning at school, Ava sat down in her seat, right in front of Emma. Ava smiled at Emma and said hello, but Emma glared at her and turned away.

Ava is the meanest person I know, and I will NEVER talk to her again, Emma thought to herself.

STEP 2:

Ask the following questions:

- Does it seem like (character's name) was willing to forgive? Why or why not?
- Why do you think it's important to forgive people?

STEP 3: Share these key concepts:

- Even after we trust Jesus as Savior, we will still sin. And since we are sinners, we will need forgiveness. We will also have to forgive others.
- Forgiveness is not always easy, but God expects us to forgive those who have hurt us.
- When we realize that God through grace has forgiven our past, present, and future sins, it helps us understand how important it is to forgive others.

STEP 4: Transition into the main lesson by opening in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you and your kids understand the importance of forgiveness.

Notes:

SECTION

4.4

Grace to Forgive



Introduction Activity (5 Minutes)

Option 2: True Forgiveness

Notes:

What You'll Need: Nothing

PREP: Ask a leader to share a brief testimony about a situation in which he or she demonstrated biblical forgiveness or someone demonstrated biblical forgiveness to him or her.

STEP 1: Introduce the leader and have the leader share his or her prepared testimony on forgiveness.

After the leader has finished, ask kids to think of a time when a friend or a family member forgave them for something. Encourage one or two kids to share that example, if time allows.

Ask the following questions:

- How did you feel before you were forgiven or before that person asked you for forgiveness?
- How did you feel after you were forgiven or after you forgave that person?
- Why do you think it's important to forgive people?

STEP 2: Share these key concepts:

- Even after we trust Jesus as Savior, we will still sin. And since we are sinners, we will need forgiveness. We will also have to forgive others.
- Forgiveness is not always easy, but God expects us to forgive those who have hurt us.
- When we realize that God through grace has forgiven our past, present, and future sins, it helps us understand how important it is to forgive others.

STEP 3: Transition into the main lesson by opening in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you and your kids understand the importance of forgiveness.

SECTION

4.4

Grace to Forgive



Main Lesson (10 Minutes)

Option 1: Biblical Forgiveness

What You'll Need: Bible, Joseph's Story handout (Resource Bundle), (optional: Egyptian costume)
(Leader's Note: Larger clubs may divide into smaller groups to complete the activity.)

PREP: Bookmark a Bible to Genesis 50:19-21 and Ephesians 4:32.

Print out a copy of the Joe's Story handout from the Resource Bundle. Ask a male guest to present this dramatic reading. (Optional: Ask the guest to wear an Egyptian costume.)

STEP 1: Ask kids to think about someone who might have hurt them or treated them badly this past week.

Share these key concepts:

- When we trust Jesus as Savior, He forgives all of our sins — the ones from our past and our present.
- But He doesn't stop there; He also forgives ALL of our future sin, the sins that we haven't even done yet. That is grace!
- Because God forgives us completely, we should forgive others (Colossians 3:13).

STEP 2: Explain to kids that God gave us examples of forgiveness in the Bible. Introduce the special guest to your kids, and ask him to present his story to your club.

STEP 3: Tell kids that Joseph's story didn't end there. After Joseph's family settled in Egypt, his father died. His brothers were afraid that Joseph would harm them.

Read Genesis 50:19-21. Tell kids that Joseph showed true forgiveness.

Share these concepts:

- Biblical forgiveness is choosing not to hold someone's sin against him or her.
- It's choosing to be kind, choosing to keep loving that person, and forgetting about the sin even if the person doesn't deserve it (Ephesians 4:32).

STEP 4: Read or recite this week's memory verse, Ephesians 4:32. Repeat the verse a second time, pausing after each phrase.

Share these key concepts:

- God gives us the command to be kind and tenderhearted, or compassionate. That means that we should truly love one another and want what is best for that other person.
- God expects us to forgive others because He has forgiven us.

STEP 5: Remind kids that forgiveness is hard sometimes, but when we read the Bible and pray, the Holy Spirit will change our heart and help us to forgive (Ephesians 3:16).

Encourage kids to remember that God will give them grace to forgive others. Close in prayer, thanking God for His amazing forgiveness and asking His help to forgive others.

STEP 6: Follow up with Lesson Application questions and Sum It Up statements from the Large Group Guide.

Notes:



Joseph's Story Handout

Hey, everyone! My name is Joseph, but you can call me Joe. I am a rich and powerful leader in Egypt, but my life wasn't always like this.

See, I had 11 brothers. ELEVEN! I was the second youngest, and I was really close to my dad. In fact, Dad made me a special coat that had lots of colors. He never did anything like that for my other brothers!

My older brothers were jealous because Dad seemed to like me more than he liked them. They were so jealous that they wanted to kill me!

One day, Dad asked me to go and check on my older brothers, who were out watching our sheep. When they saw me coming, they decided to do something mean to me.

They took my coat that Dad had made me and threw me in an old well. Then they sold me as a slave to a bunch of merchants who were headed to Egypt. They put goat's blood on my coat to make it look like my own blood. They showed the coat to my dad and told him that I must have been eaten by a wild animal.

I was a slave in Egypt for many, many years. I even ended up in prison for something I didn't do! But you know what? God was always with me. He protected me, and I knew that I could trust Him.

One day, God helped me explain the dream of the ruler of Egypt, Pharaoh, when no one else could do it. I told Pharaoh that his dream meant that there would be seven years when the people of Egypt would be able to grow lots and lots of food, but those good years would be followed by seven years in which there would be no food at all.

Pharaoh was so impressed that he made me, a former slave, the second in command in all of Egypt! It was my job to gather food during those good years so that we would have food to eat in the years when there wouldn't be any.

When the seven bad years came, people from all the other countries came to Egypt to buy food. And do you know who ended up coming? My brothers!

It had been many, many years since they had sold me into slavery, and they didn't recognize me at all. As the second in command of all of Egypt, I could have done many mean things to them. I could have denied them food. I could have thrown them into prison. I could have had them killed.

Instead, I forgave them. I gave them food, and I even had them bring my whole family to Egypt to live so that I could take care of them.

I am so glad that I chose to forgive!

SECTION

4.4

Grace to Forgive



Main Lesson (10 Minutes)

Option 2: Picture the Scene

What You'll Need: Bibles, 3 x 5 cards, pens or pencils, construction paper, markers, cans of Play Doh® (*Leader's Note: Larger clubs may divide into smaller groups to complete the activity.*)

PREP: Write the following groups of references on 3 x 5 cards, one group of references per card.

Group 1: Genesis 37:3-4, 9-11, 13-14, 23-24, 28

Group 2: Genesis 41:46-49, 53-57

Group 3: Genesis 42:3-4, Genesis 45:1-15

STEP 1: Ask kids to think about something they might have done wrong today or this week.

Share these key concepts:

- When we trust Jesus as Savior, He forgives all of our sins — the ones from our past and our present.
- But He doesn't stop there; He also forgives ALL of our future sin, the sins that we haven't even done yet. That is grace!
- Because God forgives us completely, we should forgive others (Colossians 3:13).

STEP 2: Divide the kids into pairs or groups. Give each pair or group a 3 x 5 card, a Bible, construction paper, a can of Play Doh, and markers. Instruct each pair or group to study the verses listed on their cards, and then choose one scene from their verses to illustrate either by drawing the images or recreating them with Play Doh. Encourage each person in the groups to take part in the activity.

Ask leaders to walk among the groups, offering assistance as needed.

STEP 3: After five minutes, have the first two groups present their illustrations. Share this summary:

- Joseph's brothers hated him so much that they sold him into slavery and lied to their father!
- Joseph was taken to Egypt. He was a slave, and he even ended up in prison for something he didn't do. But God was with Joseph. After many years, Joseph was made second in power in the whole country!
- Joseph was in charge of storing up food in Egypt and then selling it to other countries during a famine.

STEP 4: Have the final group present their findings.

Share this summary:

- Joseph was a powerful man, a ruler in Egypt. It had been a long time since his brothers had seen him, and they did not recognize him.
- Joseph could have had his brothers arrested and killed. Instead, he showed forgiveness. He sent food for his family.
- His brothers returned to Egypt a second time and brought along with them their youngest brother, Benjamin.

STEP 5: Ask: Why might it have been hard for Joseph to forgive his brothers?

After several kids have responded, share these key concepts:

- Biblical forgiveness is choosing not to hold someone's sin against him or her.
- It's choosing to be kind, choosing to keep loving that person, and forgetting about the sin even if the person doesn't deserve it (Ephesians 4:32).

SECTION

4.4

Grace to Forgive



Main Lesson (10 Minutes)

STEP 6: Read or recite this week's memory verse, Ephesians 4:32. Repeat the verse a second time, pausing after each phrase.

Share these key concepts:

- God gives us the command to be kind and tenderhearted, or compassionate. That means that we should truly love one another and want what is best for that other person.
- God expects us to forgive others because He has forgiven us.

STEP 7: Ask: Has there ever been a time when someone hurt you or upset you or made you angry?

Remind kids that forgiveness is hard sometimes, but when we read the Bible and pray, the Holy Spirit will change our heart and help us to forgive (Ephesians 3:16). Encourage kids to remember that God will give them grace to forgive others.

Close in prayer, thanking God for His amazing forgiveness and asking His help to forgive others.

STEP 8: Follow up with Lesson Application questions and Sum It Up statements from the Large Group Guide.

Notes: