

Use this guide to help your family learn why forgiveness is important.



First, watch this week's video!

Forgiveness: Deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay

Memory Verse

"Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV

Bible Story

A Woman Anoints Jesus' Feet
Luke 7:36-50

Bottom Line

Everyone needs forgiveness.

Activity

Fingerprint Forgiveness

What You Need:

Washable markers in various colors, white paper, wet wipes or a soapy washcloth to clean up (*optional*)

What You Do:

Invite your child to do an activity with you. Instruct them to choose five marker colors—one for each finger. Then assist them in coloring each of their fingertips a different color. As they color each finger, help them press their fingers down onto the paper to create five unique fingerprints.

Then, do the same for yourself! Compare your fingerprints to your child's fingerprints. You can even make an illustration out of the fingerprints by turning them into butterflies, bees, or people!

When you're finished, say, "Look at how unique our fingerprints are. Did you know that if we asked everyone we knew to do this same thing, none of our fingerprints would be the same as theirs? No two people have the same fingerprints. God gives *everyone* a special and unique fingerprint. In our Bible story today, we talked about something else that God gives all of us."



Talk About the Bible Story

In today's story, what did the woman do to honor Jesus? (*She washed His feet with her tears and then poured perfume on them.*)

What did Jesus do for the woman? (*He forgave her sins.*)

What does God offer to everyone? (*forgiveness*)

What does it feel like when you've done something wrong, and you know you need forgiveness?

How do we ask God for forgiveness? (*prayer*)

How many times will God forgive us? (*as many times as we ask*)

Parent: Share appropriately about a time when YOU needed forgiveness and you learned that God would forgive you, no matter what. How did it feel to know you were forgiven?



Prayer

Use this prayer as a guide, either after talking about the Bible story or sometime before bed tonight:

"God, You are an awesome, mighty, LOVING God. Thank You for (your child's name) and for the forgiveness You offer to us. Help us accept that forgiveness and be willing to forgive others, too. We love You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

Work in Progress: Redo, Rewrite, Restore

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Bible Story

Zacchaeus
Luke 19:1-10

Bottom Line

When you forgive others, it can change them.

Activity

Lucky Pennies

What You Need:

Several dirty pennies, a bowl of water, ketchup (or toothpaste), a towel, and an old toothbrush

What You Need:

Lay out the towel and set the bowl with water on top. Lay out the dirty pennies, ketchup, and toothbrush.

Give your child the pennies and point out how dirty they are. Ask what they think will happen if they rub ketchup on them. Then, squirt a small amount of ketchup (a little goes a LONG way) onto each penny.

Instruct your child to use the old toothbrush to rub the ketchup onto the pennies, scrubbing them clean. Then place them in the bowl of water to rinse. Wipe the pennies dry on the towel, and then admire how clean they are.

Say, "Just a little ketchup completely changed those pennies, didn't it? That's what forgiveness does for us—it has the power to change us!"



Talk About the Bible Story

Who from our story today was changed by Jesus' love and forgiveness? (*Zacchaeus*)

Does everyone change when we forgive them? (*No, but many do.*)

Have you ever changed the way you acted because you've been forgiven? How?

Parent: Share about a time when someone forgave you and it changed you. Maybe, as a kid, you said something hurtful to your sibling. How did your sibling's willingness to forgive you change the way you treated them later?



Prayer

Use this prayer as a guide, either after talking about the Bible story or sometime before bed tonight:

"God, thank You for showing us what true love and forgiveness look like. We're sorry for the things we've done wrong. Thank You for always loving us and being faithful to forgive us. Please help us forgive others, even when we feel hurt or angry. Help us to accept Your forgiveness in our lives and then offer forgiveness to others. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen."

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Bible Story

The Story of the Unmerciful Servant
Matthew 18:21-35

Bottom Line

Forgive others because God forgives you.

Activity

Think Fast!

What You Need:

Smartphone or timer

What You Do:

Invite your child to play a game with you. Say, "I'm going to set a timer for one minute. I'll ask you a bunch of questions super-fast. Answer them as quickly as you can!"

Set a timer for one minute, and start the timer as soon as you say the first question.

- How many seconds are there in one minute? (60)
- How many fingers are on one hand? (five)
- How many meals do you eat in one day? (three; this can vary depending on family styles)
- How many days are there in a week? (seven)
- How many toes are on BOTH feet? (10)
- How many letters are there in the alphabet? (26)
- How many worms can you eat before you get sick? (Any answer will work; have fun with this one!)

When you're finished, say, "That was some very quick thinking. Great job. Those 'how many' questions came SUPER-fast!"

In our Bible story today, Peter asked Jesus a 'how many' question, and it was REALLY important. Do you remember what it was? ("Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?") And how did Jesus respond? ("I tell you, not seven times, but 77 times.") Basically, Jesus was saying that we should forgive as many times as it takes!"

Talk About the Bible Story

We know that God forgives us no matter what. How should that affect the way we choose to forgive others?

What keeps you from forgiving? When is it difficult to forgive?

When we know we need to forgive someone, but we don't feel like forgiving, what can we do?

Parent: Share about a time you chose to forgive someone when you did NOT feel like forgiving. What happened? Talk about how your understanding of God's forgiveness for you helped you choose to forgive, even when it was hard.

Prayer

Use this prayer as a guide, either after talking about the Bible story or sometime before bed tonight:

"Dear God, thank You for choosing to love us, no matter what. We want to forgive others because YOU forgive us. Will You help us forgive because You've forgiven us? We need Your help for sure. Thank You for sending Jesus to show us Your forgiveness and love. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

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Bible Story

The Story of the Lost Son
Luke 15:11-32

Bottom Line

God will always forgive you.

Activity

Always, Sometimes, Never

What You Need:

Three pieces of paper and a writing utensil

What You Do:

Write down the words, "Always," "Sometimes," and "Never" on the three sheets of paper—one word per page. Place the sheets of paper in a line on the floor. Point out the words on the floor to make sure your child knows what each one says.

Explain that you'll call out something your child does, and they should jump to the category that correctly describes how often they do that thing.

How often do you:

- brush your teeth?
- put on clothes?
- choose to be patient with your brother or sister? (adjust as needed for your family)
- eat your vegetables?
- lick the floor? (hopefully NEVER!)
- have a snack?
- go to bed without complaint?
- remember to say "thank you"?
- finish your homework?
- share?
- eat dessert?

When you're finished, say, "There are things we do sometimes, things we do never, and things we do always. But what is something from our Bible story today that God always does?" (forgive)

Talk About the Bible Story

In the story Jesus told, what did the father do for the son who came home? (*The father forgave the son.*)

Are there some people in your life who are easier to forgive than others?

When is it hard to ask for forgiveness?

Why does God always forgive us?

Parent: Give a kid-friendly example about a time when you chose to stay mad and refused to forgive. Maybe you were a kid and just wanted to stay mad. How does God's forgiveness encourage you to forgive others?

Prayer

Use this prayer as a guide, either after talking about the Bible story or sometime before bed tonight:

"God, thank You for loving us, always. When there are times we mess up and do something wrong, help us make it right by saying we're sorry AND asking for forgiveness. Thank You for the way You always forgive us. Help us forgive others, too. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."