

Alley SG-March 14th-15th, 2020

Bible Story: Step by Step (Jesus Teaches on Forgiveness) • *Matthew 5:1-2, 23-24*

Bottom Line: Take the first step to forgive others.

Key Question: What is keeping you from forgiving?

Memory Verse: Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (*Colossians 3:13 NIV*)

1. Get Your Head in the Game

What You Need: “First Step” Page (1 per student), pens

What You Do:

- **Give** each kid a “First Step” Activity Page.
- **Tell** kids to make a list of what is wrong in the picture.
- **Encourage** kids to decide what would be the first thing they would fix.
- **Allow** time to share what they would fix first and why.

What You Say:

“There were a lot of things that needed to be fixed. Sometimes, when we are faced with a lot of options, it is difficult to decide what our first step should be. **[Transition] However, there is always a first step we should be ready to take; forgiveness.**”

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Scenario Cards (4 sets per group), “EASY” and “HARD” Signs (1 set per group)

What You Do:

- **Divide** the group into teams of three
- **Give** each team a set of “Scenario Cards”
- **Create** an area of play within your space. Place the “EASY” sign on one end, and on the other end, place the “HARD” sign.
- **Encourage** teams to read each “Scenario Cards” and place the card in between “EASY” and “HARD” to show whether it would be easy or hard to show forgiveness (or perhaps somewhere in between)
- **Facilitate** discussion on why teams place the cards where they did. **Discuss** the similarities and differences in the card placements.
- **Ask:** When is it hard to forgive someone? (*To prompt kids, ask: Is it easier to forgive someone you like or someone who annoys you? Or how do your feelings affect how easy it is to forgive someone? Is it easy to forgive someone when you are angry? What about if you have already forgiven them and they keep doing the same thing?*)

3. Discussion Questions

- When is it hard to forgive someone? What can keep us from forgiving someone?
- What are things people do when they hold a grudge?
- What have you learned that can help you to take the first step to forgive? How can knowing we are all created in God’s image help you to forgive others?

4. Verse to Take with You

What You Need: Ball (1 per group)

What You Do:

- **Divide** the group into two teams.

Note: Depending on the size of your group, you may want to combine Small Groups. This would be a great Activity with multiple Small Groups competing against each other.

- **Tell** teams to form a line, with each kid standing about two feet behind the kid in front of them.
- For each team, **give** the first kid in line a ball.
- **Explain** that teams will compete in a Memory Verse Relay. To play:
 - When you say “GO,” the first kid for each team passes the ball “over” their head to the kid behind them. The next kid in line passes the ball “under” their legs to the next kid in line. Kids continue to pass the ball down the line over the head of one kid and through the legs of the next kid until the ball reaches the end of the line.
 - Once the ball reaches the end of the line, the team turns around facing the opposite wall.
 - Kids continue to pass the ball “over” and “under” until the ball returns to the first kid in line.
 - Once the ball returns to the first kid in line, everyone must sit down. The first Small Group to sit down wins.
- Play for a total of three rounds, as outlined below.
 - For Round 1: As each kid passes the ball, they recite the first sentence of the memory verse: *Bear with each other and forgive one another*
 - For Round 2: As each kid passes the ball, they recite the second sentence of the memory verse: *if any of you has a grievance against someone.*
 - For Round 3: As each kid passes the ball, they recite the third sentence of the memory verse: *Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Uninflated balloons (1 per student)

What You Do:

- **Gather** kids in a circle.
- **Hold** a balloon and **ask** kids to think of something they are holding on to that they need to forgive or something they have forgiven in the past.
 - After each example kids share, **blow** the balloon a little bigger.
 - Examples could include: Someone said something mean to you. Or someone said they would do something and they didn’t follow through. Or maybe you got in trouble for something your sister did.

Note: Encourage kids to stick to listing minor grievances and annoyances, being careful not to let them “gossip” about friends they have in common, and making sure to be sensitive if you have any kids who are currently in or have been in difficult and more serious circumstances.

- **Explain** God doesn’t want us to hold on to anything that keeps us from forgiving someone; God wants us to let go of anything we are holding against someone. *(Let go of the balloon.)*
- **Give** kids a balloon.
- **Tell** them to blow up the balloon, and as they do, **encourage** them to silently tell God about what they maybe holding on to that they need His help to let go of.
- When their balloon is inflated, **tell** them to hold it closed while you **pray**:
 - “God, You are amazing! You sent Jesus so we could have Your forgiveness no matter what we’ve done. God, when we are hurt or angry it is hard for us to forgive. Often the first step we need to take is to tell You how we feel and trust You will help us to put up with each other and let go of what we are holding against someone. Help us to forgive as You forgave us; help us to take the first step. Amen.”
- **Tell** the group to let go of their balloons -and take the balloon with them, as a reminder to “let go”.

BEFORE DISMISSAL: AT “COMMUNION CALL”

HAND OUT “GOD TIME” CARDS TO EACH STUDENT BEFORE DISMISSING AND ALLOW THEM TIME TO BEGIN WORKING ON THE WEEKLY ACTIVITY

IF STUDENTS BRING THEM BACK THE FOLLOWING WEEK, THEY RECEIVE \$3 IN ALLEY CASH!