

# Alley SG-March 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Bible Story:** I Don't Want to Miss a Thing (Older Brother) • *Luke 15:21-32*

**Bottom Line:** When you don't forgive, you miss out.

**Key Question:** What do you lose if you don't forgive?

**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. Bible Story Extension

**What You Need:** Bibles, ½ sheet of paper (1 per student), pens, cotton balls (1 per student)

### What You Do:

- **Review** the story.
- **Ask:**
  - What was the father's response to the younger brother's return?
  - How would you describe the older brother when he found out his father threw a party celebrating the younger son's return? (*If necessary, read Luke 15:28-29. Answers could include: angry, bitter, jealous, ungrateful*)
  - What was the older brother missing out on by choosing to hold onto his negative emotions toward his brother?
  - What was the father's response to his older son? (*Luke 15:31*)
- Even though what his younger brother did was wrong, the older son had a choice to make. The older brother could decide to let go of his anger and bitterness or he could hold on to it and decide his younger brother should pay.
- **Place** a piece of paper and a pen in front of each kid, and **give** each kid a cotton ball.
- **Give** kids time to think of something they may be holding against someone. Maybe someone treated them unkindly or unfairly. Maybe someone flattened a tire on their bike or broke their favorite toy. Maybe they are angry at someone for not doing what they said they would do. Or prompt kids to think about how the older brother was holding onto his anger and resentment.
- **Explain** that the cotton ball represents something you're holding against someone.
- **Tell** kids hold on to the cotton ball with both hands and squeeze as tightly as they can.
- While squeezing the cotton ball with both hands, **challenge** kids to write "I forgive you" using only their hands.
- **Tell** kids to open their hands so the cotton ball is resting on their palms.
- Just like you cannot write "I forgive you" while focusing on squeezing the cotton ball, when you are holding on to grudges and focusing on how you may have been wronged, you could miss out on a lot. (*e.g. friendships, good times with others, joy, a party [like the older brother missed out on], etc.*)

## 2. Discussion Questions

- What can it cost you to hold a grudge? For example, what might you miss out on if you decided to hold a grudge and not forgive a friend?
- What if a friend says something unkind to you and they never say they are sorry? Do you still forgive them? Do you only forgive someone if they ask you?
- Is forgiveness always fair? How does it make you feel when it's not fair? **[Make it Personal] (Be prepared to share about a time when someone treated you unfairly or when you were mad at someone for how they treated you. Did you forgive them right away? Did it take you time to forgive them? How did you feel when you decided to forgive them? Did you miss out on something because you wanted to make them pay?)**

### 3. Tic-Tac-Toe Tournament

**What You Need:** ½ Sheet of Paper (1 per student), pens

#### What You Do:

- Pass out paper and a pen to the kids and ask them to draw five or six blank Tic-Tac-Toe grids for the next activity.
- Encourage them to draw the grids as neatly and as big as they can on their page.
- As the kids are working, ask questions about their week.
  - Did anything crazy or silly happen this week?
  - If you could go back and relive one day or event from this past week, what would it be and why?
  - Tell me about a time this week when you forgave someone. What happened?
- Have the kids pair up to play Tic-Tac-Toe.
- Whoever LOSES from the pair stays in the tournament to go on to the next round. (Kids can play another game if their first one results in a stalemate.)
- Allow the loser to find another opponent for the next round and play again.
- Continue for subsequent rounds, advancing only the losers each time until you have a final “winner.”

#### What You Say:

“Normally in Tic-Tac-Toe, the goal is to win! But in our tournament, losing was the goal. **[Transition]** In our Bible story today, we heard about an older brother who lost out on something really awesome because he refused to forgive. Let’s not miss out! Let’s forgive!”

- After playing a couple of rounds, **give** kids a Bible.
- Look up Matthew 22:39 and read it together.
- **Ask:**
  - How can forgiveness show others you love God?
  - How can forgiveness show others God loves them?
  - What opportunities can you miss out on when you choose not to forgive?
- **Tell** kids to write the verse reference, Matthew 22:39 on a card.
- **Encourage** them to write out the verse directly from the Bible, or paraphrase it on the card.
- **Challenge** them to memorize the verse and place their cards somewhere as a reminder that forgiveness is important to God.

### 4. Make Me Laugh

**What You Need:** “Make Me Laugh” Activity Page (1 per group)

#### What You Do:

- Tell the kids you are going to tell some jokes, but they have to try not to laugh.
- Guide kids to form a straight line facing you.
- Read the jokes from the Activity Page.
- If kids laugh, they are out. The last serious kid standing is the winner.
- Play again if time allows, and see if the kids have any jokes of their own.

#### What You Say:

“Those were so hilarious! It is so hard being serious when everyone else is laughing and having fun. It almost feels like you are missing out on the joke. **[Transition]** Let’s not be so serious that we forget that God is fun, and loves to see us happy!”

## 5. Make it Personal with Prayer

**What You Need:** Cotton balls from “Bible Story Extension” activity

- **Remind** kids of the activity from earlier where they held onto cotton balls.
- **Give** kids a moment to think about a time recently when they held onto a grudge or resentment toward someone for something they did. For those who are still holding grudges, encourage them to begin to let go of them and move toward forgiveness.
  - *Note: Some of your few might have serious situations they're dealing with at home or at school. Some kids might be trying to forgive hurts or wrongs that are much bigger than an annoying sibling or a non-loyal friend. As much as possible, be mindful of those kids in particular and avoid “minimizing” or “simplifying” their situations.*
- **Pray** with the kids:

### **What You Say:**

“God, Thank You for Your forgiveness and Your love. We want to show others Your love! God, please give us Your power and Your strength to forgive others. Help us to let go of anything we may be holding against others so we don't miss out on the joy of Your forgiveness. Amen!”

**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!**