

City SG-March 21st-22nd, 2020

Bible Story: Please Forgive Me (The Story of the Lost Son) • *Luke 15:11-24*

Bottom Line: Everyone needs to be forgiven.

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 (NirV)*

1. Party Invitations

What You Need: “Party Invitations”, markers

What You Do:

- Ask kids to imagine the greatest, coolest, best-ever party they can think of. The sky’s the limit!
- Give each child an invitation.
- Encourage them to think about:
 - FOR: What is the occasion? (*birthday party, Christmas party, etc.*)
 - DATE: When will the party be?
 - TIME: What time of day will the party be held?
 - PLACE: Where will the party be?
- As they’re working on their invitations, ask:
 - If you could plan a party anywhere, where would it be?
 - What games would you play at your party or what would people do for fun at your party?

2. Giving Hearts

What You Need: Heart cutouts (3 per group)

What You Do:

- Gather your group to sit in a circle.
- Select three volunteers to stand outside the circle.
- Give each of those volunteers a heart.
- Explain to the group that these volunteers will be your “Givers.”
- Instruct the rest of the group sitting on the floor to hold up one hand and close their eyes.
- While their eyes closed, the Givers will quietly hand out their hearts to three kids of their choosing and return to stand next to you.
- Once all three volunteers return, have the kids open their eyes and let the three with hearts guess who they think gave them the heart.
- If the guesser is correct, they switch places with the Giver. If incorrect, they stay in the circle and that Giver may reveal himself and stay in that position for the next round.
- Play several rounds, allowing as many kids to be the Givers as possible.

What You Say:

“In this game, you had to guess the Giver. What’s the key word in the middle of the word ‘forgiveness’? Give! How is forgiveness like a gift? When you forgive someone, it’s like offering a gift the other person doesn’t deserve. Tell me: who needs forgiveness? Yes! **[Bottom Line] Everyone needs to be forgiven.** Who always forgives? God does! God sent His only Son, Jesus, so that everyone that believes in Him could be forgiven!”

3. Verse Scramble

What You Need: Bibles, Memory Verse Cards (2 sets per group)

What You Do:

- Look up Colossians 3:13 and read it aloud to the group.
- Split your group up into 2 teams.
- When you finish, ask the kids to cover their eyes as you hide the sets of paper scraps around your Small Group area.
- Once all the words are hidden, challenge your kids to find all of the paper scraps and put the verse in order.
- Review their work by repeating the verse together as a group.

What You Say:

“One BIG truth about forgiveness is that everyone needs it! We all mess up. When we do, we can be sure that God will ALWAYS forgive us. Our verse for this month reminds us to forgive because God has forgiven us. If you find yourself refusing to forgive this week, ask God to help you remember that **[Bottom Line] everyone needs to be forgiven.**”

4. Balancing Act

What You Need: White Carpet Tape

What You Do:

- Make 2 tape lines on the carpet in your area.
- Kids will take turns walking on the lines and trying to balance without touching the floor where there's no tape.
- After kids have each had a turn, make it harder by challenging them to hop on one foot or jump along the lines.
 - **NOTE: Pull up and dispose of the carpet tape at the end of your service**

What You Say

“That was hard balancing on the lines. Sometimes you fell off or made a mistake. You and I make mistakes all the time—sometimes every day—just like the son in our story today made mistakes. Was he forgiven by his dad? *(Pause.)* Was he forgiven by God? *(Pause.)*”

“We can also be forgiven when we make mistakes. Can anyone tell me about a time when someone forgave you? *(Encourage kids to share some stories about times someone forgave them. They may need some prompting. Maybe a parent forgave them for yelling mean things or for being disobedient. Or perhaps a friend forgave them when they accidentally broke the friend's toy.)* It's such a great feeling when someone forgives us, isn't it? And it's also a great feeling when we forgive someone else. Let's remember that the next time we need to forgive someone. **[Bottom Line] Everyone needs to be forgiven—and that includes you and me!**”

5. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: Balloon (1 per group, per service)

What You Do:

- Gather the kids in a tight circle and ask them if there is anyone they need to forgive this week. (Instruct kids to think about this silently and keep their answers in their minds without saying names aloud.)
- Blow up the balloon with air and hold the end closed.
- Let the air out as you use the dialogue below to talk about why forgiveness is important.
- Close in prayer, asking God to help your group let it go and choose to forgive.

What You Say:

“What might happen if I kept on blowing up this balloon? *(Pause.)* Yes, it will pop! This balloon is like us when we refuse to forgive and choose instead to stay mad. When we choose to let go of our anger, remembering that ***[Bottom Line]*** everyone needs to be forgiven, *(let the air out of the balloon)* then everyone wins! Let’s pray and ask God to help us choose forgiveness this week for everyone!

“God, thank You for sending Jesus so that we could be forgiven! We don’t want to stay angry and blow up and do something unkind. Help us to let it go and choose to forgive. Thank You for showing us how to do that. We love You. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

BEFORE DISMISSAL: AT “COMMUNION CALL”

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

IF CHILDREN BRING THEM BACK THE FOLLOWING WEEK, THEY RECEIVE A PRIZE!