

ALLEY SG – March 11th-13th

Today's Bible Story: Life Changes (Zacchaeus) • *Luke 19:1-10*

Today's Key Question: When has someone forgiven you?

Today's Bottom Line: When you forgive others, it can change them.

Monthly 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. Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

What You Need: Zacchaeus word search (one per kid), pens or pencils

What You Do:

- Hand out Bibles and ask kids to look up Luke 19:1-10.
- Assign different parts of the passage to a few kids to read out loud for the group.
- Pass out the word search.
- As the kids are finding the words in the puzzles, ask them to describe how each of the words relates to today's Bible story.
- Ask kids the following discussion questions:
 - How did we see Zacchaeus' life change after Jesus forgave him?
 - Has being forgiven ever changed your actions?
 - Is it a guarantee that forgiveness will always change people? Why or why not?
- Take time to help kids understand that forgiveness CAN change people. This means that while we should always hope for positive change, it doesn't necessarily mean that it will happen. Or sometimes change happens, but it takes a long time. We should remember that no matter what, God calls us to forgive others, so we can trust God with the outcome of our forgiveness situations.

2. Verse Toss

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Bibles and ball

What You Do:

- Have the kids look up Colossians 3:13.
- Read the entire memory verse together.
- Then direct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Instruct the kids to roll the ball to each other.
- Tell the kids that every time someone catches the ball, EVERYONE should say the next word in the verse until you've said the verse.
- If the group misses or mixes up a word, shout "REDO," and direct the kids to start the verse from the beginning!
- Continue several times until kids are feeling more confident with the first and second parts of the verse.
- Then change the rules.
- Direct the kids to roll the ball, but only the kid who catches it says the next word of the verse.

3. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- When has someone forgiven you?
- Has anyone ever asked for your forgiveness? How did you respond?

- How can forgiveness change someone?
- Do you ever spend time asking God for forgiveness? Why or why not?
- Do you think it's more difficult to be on the receiving end of forgiveness or the giving end?

4. Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

What You Need: “Changing Stories” Activity Page (1 per group), Changing Story Write-In Pages (set of 3 sheets per group per service), pen or pencil

What You Do:

- Read the story from the first page of the “Changing Stories” Activity Page while the group listens.
- Explain that you’ll be using that same story but making a few changes to it. You’ll need everyone’s help to do this.
- Recruit a volunteer to read out loud what is written in parenthesis underneath each blank space on the second page of the “Changing Stories” Activity Page in order to give guidance on what kind of word should be written in each space.
- Choose kids to take turns giving words that the volunteer will write in those spaces, using a pen or pencil.
- Once all the spaces have been filled, read out loud the new story that has been created. Let kids discuss how the story changed once it was re-written.
- Ask kids this question to prompt discussion:
 - Can you think of a time where you forgave someone and it changed your relationship with them?
- Explain that forgiveness can be a lot like this story we just re-wrote. When we chose different words to swap out for the ones that were already there, it changed the story completely.

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Blank Cards (1 per student), pens, markers

What You Do:

- Ask kids to share if they’ve ever found out someone was thinking of them or praying for them.
 - How did it feel to be on the receiving end of their thoughtfulness?
 - Did that change or motivate you in any way?
- Explain how it can really change people when they believe someone cares about them. We can care for others by forgiving them if they do something wrong. We can also care for someone else by praying for them.
- Distribute the blank cards. Instruct them to think of one person they need to forgive.
- Give kids a few minutes to write a note to the person they need to forgive, letting them know they care about the relationship and want to forgive them for what they did.
 - Some kids may not have any current situations that require forgiveness. Let them know they can write a note to anyone in their lives, telling them how thankful they are for them.
- Encourage kids to send or hand deliver their notes. Ask them to commit to praying for the person they wrote a note to. Tell them that praying for someone is great way to show love to them.
- Lead the group in a prayer and give kids an opportunity to silently pray for the person they wrote to.

Pray:

“Dear God,

Thank You for how you always forgive us. Thank You for reminding us how important it is to forgive others. Please help us forgive people who have hurt us or let us down. (Encourage kids to pray silently at this time for the people they wrote notes to.) Thank You for these people you have placed in our lives. We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”