

CITY LG – March 18-20, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Mercy, Mercy Me (The Story of the Unmerciful Servant) • *Matthew 18:21-35*

Today's Bottom Line: Forgive others because God forgives you.

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 (NIV)*

NEED ONE BEACH BALL PER GROUP

WORSHIP

Standing in Your Light

All of Me

Have kids get into their small groups Before you start Large Groups

“Hi, everyone! I’m so pumped to see you all here today, because we’ve got lots of fun things happening! Can anyone tell me what we’re talking about this month? *(Pause for response.)* That’s right! We’re talking about forgiveness.

SLIDE: Virtue

“Forgiveness means deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn’t have to pay.

SLIDE: Theme

“I know when someone has said something mean to you, or they’ve done something to frustrate you or hurt your feelings, it’s really easy to want to get back at them. But forgiveness means that you decide NOT to get even. You decide *(take a deep breath)* to let it go.

“The truth is, we all need forgiveness because we ALL mess up from time to time. I’ve got a fun game that we can play today that will help us practice working together as a team—even if we mess up! Here’s how it works.

“You’ll be playing this game with your small group. Go ahead and sit in a circle with your group, then look back up here when you’re ready.

Give the kids some time to circle up.

“Okay, here’s a beach ball for each group!

Give a beach ball to each Small Group Leader.

“The object of the game is to get the ball moving around the circle, and we’ve got some fun ways for you to do that!

“Now, this game will go quickly, and you’ll probably mess up at some point, so you’ll need to work together as a team to get back on track!

“The first move is called **‘side-to-side.’** For this one, when you get the ball from someone, you’ll pass it right on to the next person next to you. Continue passing around the circle.

“The next move is called **‘over-under.’** For this one, one person will pass the ball over their head to the person next to them in the circle, who will lift their leg and pass the bowl under their leg to the next person in the circle, like this.

Demonstrate

“The next move is called ‘**in the air.**’ For this one, you’ll try to keep the ball in the air like this and bounce it to the next person in the circle.

Demonstrate

“Those are the three moves! I’ll call out one move, and you’ll just keep doing that move around your circle as quickly as you can until I call out a NEW move. Give me a thumbs-up if you’ve got it! (*Pause for response.*)

“Okay, everybody on your feet! Let’s get ready to play. Three . . . two . . . one . . . GO!

Play Spotify playlist

Call out one of the three moves to get the kids started. Encourage them to pass the ball around their circle as quickly as they can. If the ball hits the ground, encourage them to pick it up and keep going (“That’s okay! Let’s get back on track!”).

From time to time, call out different moves, speeds, and variations (“Over-under, twice as fast!” “In the air, slow motion!” “Side-to-side, and say ‘Cowabunga’ as you pass the ball!”).

Have fun with the game and variations. Play for two or three minutes total. Collect the beach balls when the game is over.

“Way to go, everyone! I saw some groups doing a great job of working together. I think every group dropped the ball a few times—especially when things got really fast and crazy. But you didn’t let that stop you. You kept the game going, and we had a ton of fun!

SLIDE: Theme

We’ve been traveling through God’s Big Story as we’ve looked at lots of different stories throughout the Bible. (*Hold up Bible.*)

“God promised to send a Savior, and at the right time, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. When Jesus grew up, He said and did amazing things. He performed miracles and healed people who were sick. Jesus often told short stories, called parables, which used everyday situations to help people understand big things about God.

“Today, we get the chance to look at one of Jesus’ parables that helps us understand why it’s so important to forgive. Take a look...

Bible Story Video

“Wow! Jesus made it very clear that we should be quick to forgive others, because we’ve been forgiven ourselves.

“The king in the story is like God. God forgives US. So we should forgive other people.

“God has forgiven each of us more than we will ever know, so we can pass on that same forgiveness when people mess up or hurt our feelings.

Take a look at our bottom line for this week

Bottom Line Video

SLIDE: Bottom Line

“Let’s say that together one more time **“Forgive others because God forgives you.”**”

“One thing’s for sure, we need God’s help to do that. Let’s pray and talk to God about that now.”

SLIDE: Theme

PRAY

STORYTELLER: “God, thank You so much for your love and forgiveness. There’s nothing we could ever do to make You love us more or less than You already do. And there’s nothing we could ever do that You wouldn’t forgive! Help us remember that and love and forgive others the way You love and forgive us. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

“Remember, when we forgive, we get to let go of our OWN anger and hurt. Forgiving someone else can actually help you find freedom in your own heart, because you’re not worried about getting even or making the other person pay.

“Our memory verse, Colossians 3:13, gives us a good reminder of why we should forgive. Paul wrote these words in his letter to the people in the Colossian church. He said . . .

SLIDE: Memory Verse

“Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you.” (NirV)

“That’s what it’s all about! We can forgive because God forgives us. You can talk about that some more in Small Group! But before that...let’s take our offering.

OFFERING TIME:

Before we go to small groups, all this month, we have been bringing our money to support Vida Nueva Ministries in Piedras Negras, Mexico. Your offering helps people just like you to have the resources they need to experience a new life with Jesus! Here is a picture of our friends Eli and Mandy Garcia and their family...

SLIDE: Eli and Mandy

They are our friends and Parkview Global heroes that tell people about Jesus down in Mexico. So, if you brought your offering today, you can bring it up now while this video plays!

CG: Vida Nueva Ministries Video (Runtime: 2:00)

Head to small groups