

CITY SG – March 11th-13th, 2023

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

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. Zacchaeus Says

Bible Story Review

What You Need: "Zacchaeus Says" Activity Page (2 per group)

What You Do:

- Tell the group they're going to play a game like "Simon Says" but it's called "Zacchaeus Says"!
- Just like in "Simon Says," kids should only do the actions when you say "Zacchaeus Says" beforehand.
- Direct the kids to act-out the story when you say "Zacchaeus says" before an action.
- Instruct the kids to freeze if you don't say "Zacchaeus says" before an action.
- Before starting the story, go through the actions a couple of times so kids have a general idea of what each action is.
- When ready, retell today's Bible story using the "Zacchaeus Says" Activity Page.
- If any kids do the actions when you haven't said "Zacchaeus says," they're out!
- Continue playing until you're down to one Zacchaeus or you've retold the entire story.
 - If all kids are out before the story has been fully told, pick up the story where you left off with everyone "in" and playing again.

What You Say:

"You all did a great job playing 'Zacchaeus Says'! The truth is, once Zacchaeus was forgiven by Jesus, his entire life changed. He once was a rich man who collected taxes, but after Jesus forgave him, he decided to give his money away to those who needed it. He once was an outcast in his community, but once Jesus forgave him, he became a follower of Jesus. And just like we're changed when Jesus forgives us, **[Bottom Line] when you forgive others, it can change them.**

2. Heart Art

Application Activity

What You Need: Assorted cardstock hearts (20 per group to reuse every service), white cardstock paper (1 per kid), scotch tape, markers or crayons

What You Do:

- Set out the hearts.
- Give each kid a piece of paper.
- Have kids pick a heart or two and place it on their white paper.

- Show the kids how to create a tape loop and tape their heart to their paper. (If you have extra hearts, kids can have more than one.)
- Instruct the kids to tape the heart (s) to their paper.
- Allow kids to color their WHOLE paper, even coloring up to or over hearts. They may need to hold the heart down with one hand as they color around or over it.
- When the kids are done coloring, gently pull off the taped heart(s) to show the heart outline underneath.
- **Collect hearts to put in cart for the next group to use.**
- Have kids write “Forgive Others” on their paper. (Help those who cannot spell yet).
- Encourage kids to hang this picture up as a reminder to forgive others.

What You Say:

“What did we do after we were done coloring our picture? (*Invite responses.*) That’s right, we took the hearts away! But when we did that, we created something new. And when we forgive others for what they’ve done wrong, it can create something new, too!

“Forgiveness changes everything. Just like we can change when God forgives us, **[Bottom Line] when you forgive others, it can change them.** Even though it’s never a guarantee, we always hope that the people we forgive will change for the better. But even if they don’t change, forgiveness is good for us. And we can forgive others because God has forgiven us so much. When you look at the heart you made, remember **[Bottom Line] when you forgive others, it can change them.**”

3. Verse Toss

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Bibles and ball (1 per group)

What You Do:

- Look up Colossians 3:13 with the navigation tips below **if you feel your group is able.**

Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When kids find the table of contents, lead them to find “Colossians” in the list under “New Testament.” When the kids find “Colossians,” lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find “Colossians.” Help the kids find the page. When they find “Colossians,” explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 13 in chapter 3.

- Read the entire memory verse aloud for the kids.
- Ask if anyone can remember the first part of the verse that they learned last week. (*Put up with one another.*)
- Say the first part of the verse a few times together.
- After you’ve reviewed the first part, introduce the next part: *Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone.*
- Say the middle part of the verse a few times 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 first two parts of 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.
- Repeat as time and interest allow!

What You Say:

"Today, we focused on forgiving one another if you are holding something against someone. Sometimes, when we're hurt by something someone did or said, we have a hard time forgiving them. But the truth is, **[Bottom Line] when you forgive others, it can change them.** When we forgive others, our friendship with them can be changed for good. God can heal what's been broken."

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: No supplies needed.

What You Do:

- Remind your group that **[Bottom Line] when you forgive others, it can change them.**
- Then lead your group in a call and response prayer, having kids repeat what you said when you pause.

What You Say:

"Forgiveness, deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay, is our responsibility. What the other person chooses to do is theirs. We can forgive, and the other person can change like Zacchaeus. OR they might not. They might keep bugging you. Let's pray that God would help us choose to forgive anyway, to GIVE the gift of letting it go. I'll say a phrase and I want you to repeat it aloud after me.

"Dear God *(pause)*, we love you. *(Pause.)* Will you help us choose to forgive *(pause)* and let it go *(pause)* instead of holding onto our anger? *(Pause.)* Thank you for always forgiving us *(pause)* because you love us. *(Pause.)* In Jesus' name we pray, amen." *(Pause.)*