

Keep in mind, activities do not have to be done the same day as the story. They can be or done throughout the week. One a day or every few days, whatever works for you. These activities help to support the story, but they are also great ways to remind kids of biblical truths that we need daily.

***KIND AND COMPASSIONATE**

WHAT YOU NEED: copy paper, pen or pencil, red crayons

WHAT YOU DO:

- Encourage kids to name times they might need to forgive others. (*When a sibling takes the last cookie or favorite snack; when a parent or aunt/uncle forgets to come to your game; when a friend doesn't want to play with you.*)
- On a piece of paper have kids to draw how they feel in those situations. They can express their emotions with drawings, emoji-like symbols, words (unintelligible scribbles are fine too). Expression trumps form!
- Next, ask kids to tell ways they could show forgiveness to the people who hurt their feelings or made them mad. (*Say, "I forgive you"; give a hug; say, "That's OK"; pray for the person; do or say something nice for the person.*)
- Finally, guide kids to draw large hearts over their drawings. Use the conversation below as a guide to correlate the heart with forgiveness. As you are talking, they can be coloring in their heart.

WHAT YOU SAY:

- Since God showed His incredible kindness and love to us by forgiving us because of what Jesus did, we can show God's kindness and love to others by forgiving them, too. Forgiveness is choosing to love others even when they hurt us. And when we choose to love others with God's love, His love helps cover over the hurt and sadness and anger we feel, just like the hearts you drew covered over the things that hurt you.
- Is it always easy to forgive others? No, it's not. But **the story of Jesus changes how I forgive others**. Since God showed His kindness and love to me by forgiving me because of what Jesus did, I can show His kindness and love to others by forgiving them, too.

***WIPE IT AWAY**

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible, foil; 12-inch length per child, dry erase markers, paper towels

WHAT YOU DO:

- Read Ephesians 4:32 out loud. Let kids take turns sharing what they remember about this verse from the story.
- Ask for examples of things we sometimes do that need to be forgiven, such as breaking a promise, lying, saying unkind things, laughing at someone when they're not trying to be funny, disobeying a parent or grandparent, etc.
- Remind everyone that God forgives even the worst of sins and He is our example.
- Give each of the kids a piece of foil and a dry erase marker. A hard surface to work on would be best.
- Have kids write or draw on the foil a simple scenario in which someone needs to offer forgiveness.
- After they are done, let them share what they drew.
- Each time someone shares, read Ephesians 4:32, asking how it applies to the situation in their picture.
- When they finish sharing, let them use a paper towel to wipe the foil clean.

WHAT YOU SAY:

When you wiped away the markings on your foil, it reminded me of the way God's forgiveness works. His love wipes our sin away and makes our heart clean and happy again. Today's Bottom Line says: **the story of Jesus changes how I forgive others**. Remember that God forgives you for all of your sins. He wants you to be the kind of kid who forgives others that way too."

*LET IT GO

WHAT YOU NEED: Stones; 2 per child, paper, markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each child two stones, a sheet of paper, and a marker.
- Explain that they must hold the stones in their hand (the one they are writing with) as they write the word “FORGIVE” on a piece of paper.
- After a few minutes, challenge them to decorate the edges of their papers while continuing to hold the stones.
- Next, have them set their stones aside, turn over their papers, and write the word “FORGIVE” again. Decorate too, if time allows.
- Ask how it felt to write without the stones in their hands. Point out how much better their pictures look.
- Discuss what happens when we hold onto a hurt instead of forgiving someone. (*We are sad; we lose a friend; we try to get even; our hearts feel heavy.*) Why should we forgive even when we don’t feel like it? (*We are obeying God and doing the right thing; we are showing love; we have been forgiven by God.*)
- Encourage the kids to hang their pictures somewhere as a reminder not to hold onto bad feelings about others whose mistakes have hurt them in some way.

WHAT YOU SAY:

When we hold on to our anger or hurt and don’t forgive, it’s like holding onto a rock and trying to draw a nice picture. It messes everything up. God wants us to think about the way He forgives us. He never says, ‘No, I won’t forgive you.’ Every time we ask, God forgives us. **The story of Jesus changes how I forgive others.** If we want to walk the way Jesus walked, then we need to forgive others and treat them like they’re forgiven, too. This week, when someone hurts your feelings or makes you angry, stop and think about the way God forgives you. It’ll help you to be more willing to forgive someone else.

*GOD FORGAVE

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible marked at Ephesians 2, “Rebus Cards” (NIRV) Activity Page, stopwatch or timer;

Optional: pennies, Tic-Tac’s®, bowls, tweezers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Lead the kids in a few impossible “Minute to Win It”-style challenges. Give kids 30 seconds to:
 - o Stand by a wall and jump to touch a mark placed well beyond reach
 - o Stand and jump to a mark 10 feet away
- Optional:*
- o Stack 100 pennies in a single tower
 - o Use tweezers to move 30 Tic-Tac’s® from one bowl to another

WHAT YOU SAY:

Was it possible to do the challenges I gave you? (*No!*) Just like the challenges I gave you were impossible to do, it’s IMPOSSIBLE for us to do ANYTHING to earn God’s forgiveness and salvation. (*Open your Bible to Ephesians 2.*) Ephesians 2:8 tells us that ‘God’s grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn’t come from anything you do.’

So where DOES our salvation come from? Yes, our salvation comes from Jesus. Jesus loves us SO much that He died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. When we believe in Jesus and ask Him to forgive us for our sins, the bad things we do, He will. And when God forgives us through Jesus, we have God’s promise that one day we will live with Him forever.

So, remember (*walk kids through the rebus cards as you say the verse*): ‘[God’s grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn’t come from anything you do. It is God’s gift.](#)’” (*Ephesians 2:8*)

*FORGIVE EACH OTHER

WHAT YOU NEED: Tic-Tac-Bingo Game Boards; Tic-Tac-Bingo Cards; (five hearts and five x's each), and Tic-Tac-Bingo Scenarios; These are all in Activity Pages; small bag or cup to put scenarios in

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each child a game board and five hearts and five X's.
- Invite someone to draw a scenario from the bag. Read the number on the scenario aloud.
- Read the scenario. If the child in the scenario practiced forgiveness, kids should place a "heart" card over that number on their game board. If the child did not show forgiveness, lead them to place an "X" over the number.
- Continue play until someone gets tic-tac-bingo, whether that be three in a row or fill the whole card up. You chose.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Ephesians 4:32 tells us that God wants us to 'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.' What do you think that verse means? (*Be kind to others and forgive them; since God forgives others, we should forgive them, too.*)

When are times you can be kind and forgive others? (When my brother is mean to me; when my sister plays with my toys without asking; when someone at school won't let me borrow a pencil, etc.) All of those sound good.

Is it always easy to forgive others? No, it's not. But **the story of Jesus changes how I forgive others**, because if God loves me and forgives me through Jesus, then I can love others and forgive them, too."

PRAY

WHAT YOU SAY:

'The story of Jesus changes how I. how we, forgive others. Since God showed His kindness to me by forgiving me because of what Jesus did, I can show kindness to others by forgiving them, too. Forgiveness is choosing to love others even when they hurt us. And when we choose to forgive others, we show them God's amazing, incredible love. And that's a GREAT thing! God forgives us all the time. Since He is our example, we should do our best to forgive others all the time, too.

- Ask the kids to think of one person they need to forgive. It may be a family member or a friend who treated them unfairly or said something hurtful. Explain that you are going to pray and they should silently (in their own head) repeat your words adding their adding their own details if wanted.

Pray:

"Dear God, thank You for forgiving me and helping me learn how to forgive others. (*Pause.*) I know You want me to forgive like You forgive me. (*Pause.*) Sometimes that's hard, especially when I'm angry, but I want to follow your example. (*Pause.*) Help me to forgive the person I'm thinking of right now. (*Pause.*) In Jesus' name, amen."