

GOD FORGIVES

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE FORGIVE SIN

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Luke 9:51-56

MEMORY VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37b, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children to forgive people who have sinned against them.

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Jesus was about to finish his mission on earth and was on his way to Jerusalem, where he would suffer the punishment for the sins of the world. During the journey, he sent his disciples to prepare to stop and rest in a Samaritan village.

When the Samaritans found out that Jesus and his disciples were headed to Jerusalem, the political and religious center of the Jewish people, they denied them a place to stay for the night. This was a serious insult. Hospitality towards travelers was integral to these ancient cultures. Enmity among Jews and Samaritans had a long history due to constant racial and cultural conflicts.

The disciples were angry at being treated this way by the Samaritans, and encouraged Jesus to punish them. But he showed them again that he was the Son of God. They had always heard that the Messiah would end the enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans. However, they believed that this would be by punishment and severe orders.

When the Samaritans rejected Jesus and his apostles, it seemed logical to them that he would punish them. Instead, Jesus had other plans and rebuked them. They knew he was the Christ, but they had not understood that his mission was to forgive and redeem, not to destroy. He had come to the world to give grace and forgiveness, not punishment and judgment.

ADAPTATION

Social skills of children grow as they age. They have left the security of their home to attend school during a large part of their day. Their world has opened and taught them new ways of relating to others. Learning to relate well to others is not always easy for them. As they make friends, it is likely that they will experience conflict. Kindness is a healthy way to deal with conflict. Being kind to others (friends, family, and sometimes enemies) is essential to constructing and maintaining social relationships.

For small children, it can be hard to be kind to those who have mistreated them. Generally, they react aggressively and do not think before they act. They follow their impulses and are guided by their emotions. Other times they do not know how to respond and they feel inferior and vulnerable.

This lesson is very similar to the one about David, who decided to treat King Saul with kindness, even though he was his enemy. Studying this topic again will help to reinforce what they learned, and to understand this biblical principle from the perspective of the New Testament.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

You decide!

This game will help you prepare children to listen to this Bible story and apply it to their daily lives. Children will take turns acting as the principal of a school. You will represent a teacher who is asking him or her what to do with the following children:

1. A fifth grader stole a younger child's lunch money.
2. A fourth grader ran through the halls and knocked over a child who was on crutches.
3. A first grader hid one of her classmate's pencils.
4. A second grader shared all of his friend's secrets with the class.
5. A third grader made fun of someone's clothes.

Be careful not to mention names; just say "a boy or a girl." The child representing the principal should decide the punishment that the guilty child deserves. After all the punishments have been decided, ask the children how they would feel if they were one of the guilty children and had to complete the punishment assigned by the principal.

Tell them that when one person hurts another person, many people will want them to be punished. Sometimes, the person who was hurt decides to take revenge on the person who hurt them. This is referred to as "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Ask, "Can anyone give me an example of this?" Allow the group to respond. Mention that in the Bible story, some people treated Jesus badly, and today we will learn how he responded.

TEACH THE LESSON

Prior to the session carefully study Luke 9:51-56 and be prepared to tell the story in your own words.

Help your children understand the context in which today's Bible story takes place. Jesus and his disciples were completing a long trip. They had walked many miles on rocky trails and they were tired and hungry. During their journey, the Teacher, Jesus, had healed the sick, cast out demons, and helped many people. It is only logical that he felt tired and wanted to rest.

In addition to all of that, Jesus knew that these would be his last few days on earth before suffering the punishment for all the sins of the world on the cross, and his heart was troubled.

Tell the story to your children and invite them to read it in their own Bible.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Who says what?

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #348-A, crayons, and pencils. Review the Bible story by reading the phrases in the bubbles and decide which character said them. Let the children read the phrases from left to right and draw a line from the bubbles to the characters that said the phrases.

What are you thinking?

Looking at the illustrations on Student Activity Sheet #348-B, start a discussion about what is happening in each picture. Have your children create a story based on the illustration and talk about how the mistreated children should act. Ask and encourage questions and invite your children to answer them according to the Bible passage.

As they express their viewpoints, encourage them to remember that Jesus teaches us to forgive, even when others are not kind to us.

As a review, write on the board in large letters, "What is forgiveness?" and surround it with drawings of clouds, circles, balloons (whatever is easy to draw), and inside the circles write the following words: fight, revenge, love others, forget, continue being a friend, help, hit, be kind.

Instruct your children to erase the words that do not show an attitude of forgiveness. When they are done, only words that put into practice what Jesus taught about forgiveness will remain.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

For this activity, you will need to write the memory verse on a piece of paper or cardboard and then cut it into strips. Then put the strips in a box or bag.

Mix them up and allow your children to take them out one by one and put them in order. If they succeed, congratulate them and award them with a treat if you can.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask the class for prayer requests. Then invite a volunteer to end the class in prayer.

Encourage

Praise God and give thanks for loving and forgiving all of us equally.

Invite

Challenge the children to invite their friends and family to church. Tell them something interesting about the next session.