



MARCH THEME

FIX IT UP

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 18:21-35

Dude, Where's Your Forgiveness? |
77 Times / Unmerciful Servant

BOTTOM LINE

Since God forgave you, you should
forgive others

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

LIFE APP

Forgiveness | Deciding that someone
who has wronged you doesn't have
to pay

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to
be treated, and with God's help...
I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **FORGIVENESS** and God's character, as shown
through God's big story

This WEEK: We finish the month with another one of Jesus' parables in **Matthew 18:21-35**. Jesus tells the story of a servant who likes to live it up—even though he's weighed down by MILLIONS of dollars in debt! This servant gets a big break when the king forgives his debt. You'd think he's got it made—until he finds a man who owes him a few bucks. You'd think he'd pay it forward and cancel the debt, but that's not what happened. He gets caught when he didn't forgive others like the king forgave him.

Bottom Line: **Since God forgave you, you should forgive others.** Forgiveness is full circle. God chose to forgive us when we had a huge debt against God because of our sin. Because we are forgiven of so much, when others hurt us, we should respond with forgiveness in return. We pray that kids will start to realize how, in response to the love they're given by God, they can forgive people in their life.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to help kids realize the great forgiveness God has made available to them. Pray that they would fully embrace the love God has offered them and be excited to share it with others.

•• COUNT IT UP!

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask for two volunteers and have them stand back to back.
- When you say "FORGIVE," the kids should face each other and show one to five fingers on one hand. The object is to be the first kid to add the sum of fingers showing between the two partners and say "forgive" for each finger showing.
- Whoever does it fastest moves to the next round.
- Have another kid challenge the winner.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance to play.

What You Say: "In this game, what is the most times anyone had to say 'forgive'? What is the maximum number possible in this game? (10 times; 5 fingers showing from each kid) Forgiving someone 10 times would be a lot of forgiveness! I wonder what the limit is for how many times we are to forgive someone. **[Transition] Today in Large Group Worship/Wow Family Worship we'll see/we saw how many times Jesus says we should forgive.**



●● **FAVORITE THING**

What You Need: Copy paper, markers

What You Do:

- Ask kids to draw a picture of their favorite material possession.
- When they are finished, go around the group and let kids share their pictures and talk about why that item is their favorite.
- Ask: If somebody broke your favorite thing 77 times, would you let them use it again?

What You Say: “We’ve been talking a lot about the number 77 today. **[Transition]** In Large Group Worship/WoW Family Worship, we are going to learn/we learned what Jesus says we should do 77 (or even more!) times.”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● **TRUE, FALSE, OR NOT IN STORY** *(application activity / review the Bible story)*

What You Need: Copy paper, masking tape, beanbag

What You Do:

- Use the paper to make signs that read: “TRUE,” “FALSE,” and “NOT IN STORY” in large block letters.
- Place the papers in a row about five feet from your small group area. Mark a starting line with masking tape on the floor.
- Point out the signs and read them aloud.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Read the statements below. Kids must determine if the statement is true, false, or not in the story. Each team will line up behind the starting line. Select a team to go first, answer the question, and throw the beanbag onto the appropriate paper.
- If the player answers correctly, his team receives five points. If the beanbag makes it onto the appropriate paper, they receive an additional five points. If he answers incorrectly, give them the correct answer and an opportunity to throw the beanbag anyway. If he makes it onto the correct paper, his team still receives five points.
- After all the statements have been read, tally points and declare a winner.

STORY STATEMENTS:

1. Zippo the clown asked Jesus how many times you have to forgive someone who hurts you. *(False; it was Peter)*
2. Jesus replied: “Not seven times, but 77 times” (Matthew 18:22 NIV). *(True)*
3. People who can write with both their hands are called ambidextrous. *(Not in story)*
4. The servant who appeared before the king didn’t owe him very much. *(False; he owed him a great deal of money)*
5. When the man begged the king to forgive him, the king had mercy and forgave the man his debt. *(True)*
6. Baby kangaroos are called joeys. *(Not in story)*
7. When the king forgave his debt, the man was very happy. *(True)*
8. A baby is born in the world every three seconds. *(Not in story)*
9. The forgiven man was so grateful to be free of his debt that he forgave the man who owed him a much smaller amount. *(False; the forgiven man refused to forgive the smaller debt)*
10. When the king called the forgiven man back, he was happy that he had refused to forgive someone else. *(False; the king was angry that he chose not to forgive as he had been forgiven)*



11. When fish travel in groups, it's called a school. (*Not in story*)
12. Today we learned: **[Bottom Line] Since God forgave you, you should forgive others.** (*True*)

What You Say: "I just love how Jesus tells stories like these to help teach us a lesson. They're called parables...stories with a purpose. Can you believe that the man in the story who had JUST been forgiven for such a big debt then refused to forgive someone who owed him very little? We are like that man. God has forgiven us. God sent Jesus to teach us about forgiveness. We know that God forgives us when we mess up. And **[Bottom Line] since God forgave you, you should forgive others.**"

[Make It Personal] (*Tell your group an age-appropriate story about a time you chose to forgive someone, even when it was hard. Talk about how you chose to forgive because you had been forgiven.*)

●● **CAUSE AND EFFECT** (*application activity*)

What You Need: "Cause Statements" and "Effect Statements" activity cards

What You Do:

- Talk to the kids about the relationship between cause and effect. Give the following example: "You are careful to brush your teeth twice a day, so you don't have cavities when you go see your dentist." The cause—brushing your teeth twice a day—leads to the effect of no cavities.
 - Let a couple volunteers come up with their own cause and effect statements.
 - Shuffle the "Cause Statements" and lay them face down in a stack in the center of your small group area.
 - Hand out "Effect Statements" to group members. If you have fewer than 10 kids in your group, some can have two cards.
 - Let the kids take turns drawing a "Cause Statement" to read aloud and then work together to find the matching "Effect Statement."
- Answers are below...

Answer key:

Cause

- You get plenty of rest.
- You study all of your spelling words.
- You spend time reading every night.
- You're a good friend to others.
- You practice at the batting cages.
- You choose healthy foods.
- You drink lots of water during the game.
- You practice your handwriting each night.
- You forget your gloves and hat.
- You stay on your tablet too long.

Effect

- You have lots of energy the next day.
- You make a 100 on your spelling test.
- You finish your first chapter book in a week.
- You have good friends to play with.
- You knock the ball out of the park at your next game.
- Your body is strong and healthy.
- You don't get dehydrated or feel lightheaded.
- Your teacher compliments your penmanship.
- Your hands and head freeze at the bus stop.
- You lose the privilege of playing on your tablet for a week.

What You Say: "You did a great job matching up our cause-and-effect statements today. There's a cause-and-effect relationship between being forgiven and forgiving others. The cause—God has forgiven you—leads to the effect—that you can forgive others. When you understand that relationship, forgiveness becomes much easier. **[Bottom Line] Since God forgave you, you should forgive others.** When it's hard to forgive, I want you to think about the fact that God has forgiven you. **[Bottom Line] Since God forgave you, you should forgive others.**"

●● **REPEAT** (*memory verse*)

What You Need: Timer or mobile device (optional)

What You Do:

- Have kids sit in a circle.
- Tell one kid to say the first word of the memory verse. The next kid repeats the first word and adds the next one. The next kid repeats

