



**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.

**●● COTTON BALL PICK UP**

**What You Need:** Large bag of cotton balls, 2 craft sticks per kid, empty leader bin

**What You Do:**

- Choose one group member to be the official counter. Hand the rest of the group members 2 craft sticks each.
- Dump a large pile of cotton balls in the center of your small group table.
- Kids must use the craft sticks (like chopsticks) to move the cotton balls from the table to the bin. The counter should count each cotton ball that goes into the bin. Stop when your group reaches 77 cotton balls.

**What You Say:** "Wow! You are great picker-uppers and counters! How many cotton balls did you count? Yes! There were 77! That's a lot of cotton balls! *[Sunday Leaders:]* Pay attention to today's Bible story and notice what the number 77 has to do with anything! *[Wednesday Leaders:]* What does the number 77 have to do with our Bible story?"



●● **FAVORITE TOY**

**What You Need:** Copy paper, crayons

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids to draw and color a picture of their favorite toy.
- When they are finished, go around the group and let kids share their pictures and talk about why that toy is their favorite.
- Ask: If somebody broke your favorite toy 77 times would you let them play with 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.]*

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## 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.

●● **WEIGHTED DOWN** *(application activity / review the Bible story)*

**What You Need:** Weights from “Weighted Down” activity page, “Henry’s Choices” activity pages, glue sticks, crayons

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids if any of them have heavy backpacks that they take to school every day. Does anyone walk to school wearing a big backpack? What about kids who ride the bus? Is it difficult to climb the stairs of the bus with a heavy backpack on?
- Tell kids that when somebody won’t forgive someone else for something, it’s like they have a heavy backpack to carry and they feel weighted down. It’s hard to do anything if you’re carrying all that weight.
- Then give each kid 10 weights and a “Henry’s Choices” activity page.
- Read Henry’s forgiveness choices (below) one at a time.
- For each situation, let kids decide if they think it would be hard to forgive or if they think they could forgive pretty easily.
- For the ones they think would be difficult, they can glue a weight on or near Henry’s backpack.
- For the choices they think they could forgive pretty easily, they should glue the weight near his feet.
- Encourage kids to make their own choices. Tell them it’s okay if they don’t think it’d be easy to forgive in every situation. As kids make their choices, you can ask them why they feel the way they do. But be careful that the activity doesn’t take so long that they get bored or become disengaged.
- Allow kids to color their pictures once you’ve gone through all the choices.

**Henry’s Choices:**

- While Henry was trying to go down the slide, his friend kept climbing up the slide and blocking him from going down.
- Henry’s grandpa promised that he would play ball with him when he came over, but he got too busy talking to the adults.
- Henry’s sister knocked down the LEGO® creation he had been working on for two days.
- Henry’s dad told him he wasn’t allowed to play outside with his friends one afternoon. He didn’t give him a reason why.
- When his friends were throwing rocks on the playground, Henry’s teacher punished him too even though he didn’t throw any rocks. Later, she said she was sorry.
- Henry’s mom gave some of his toys away and he didn’t get to pick which ones.
- Henry’s dog tore up the pages of his favorite book.



- Henry's baby brother cried all night and kept Henry awake.
- Henry's friend didn't pick him to play on the basketball team at recess.

**What You Say:** "Could you imagine if Henry didn't forgive at all? His backpack would have been way too heavy to carry. When we choose not to forgive, it weighs our hearts down just like it weighed down his backpack. The good news is we can always make the choice to show others forgiveness like we've received from God! **[Make It Personal]** *(Tell kids an age-appropriate story about a time when you didn't want to forgive, but then you remembered how much forgiveness God has shown you.)* **[Bottom Line]** Since God forgave you, you should forgive others."

•• **I'M A BOSS** *(application activity)*

**What You Need:** Orange construction paper strips, "I'm a Boss" activity cards, tape, glue sticks, crayons

**What You Do:**

- Give each kid an orange construction paper strip and an "I'm the Boss" badge.
- Ask if anyone can or wants to read what the badge says. Tell kids that because God forgives us all the time and wants us to forgive others, God will help us do just that! Therefore, we're all "bosses" at forgiveness!
- Let kids color and decorate their badges and construction paper strips.
- Then help them glue the badge in the center of the construction paper strip.
- Wrap each kid's strip around his upper arm and secure it with tape.

**What You Say:** "You guys have been doing such an amazing job at forgiving this month that I think you are officially forgiveness bosses! There is no one as great at forgiving as God, but we can definitely try to love and forgive people like God does. When you are having a hard time forgiving those super tough things that happen, know that **[Bottom Line]** since God forgave you, you should forgive others, and remember the happiness that forgiveness has brought you this whole month!"

•• **LETTING GO** *(memory verse activity)*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids if anyone has ever let go of a balloon outside and watched it fly into the air. Let them tell a couple of stories if this question causes lots of talking!
- Ask kids if they have seen the movie "Frozen" and if they know the song "Let It Go." What was Elsa trying to let go of?
- Tell kids that this month's verse talks about letting go of what someone did to you and forgiving them instead. When we forgive, we let go of the wrong things others do to us.
- Explain that the group is going to say the memory verse while holding their hands together tightly, as if they are holding on to something.
- Say Colossians 3:13 as a group and then encourage everyone to open up their hands and lift them upwards, like they are letting go of being mad at someone and giving the situation to God.

**What You Say:** "Our verse says to forgive when we are holding onto something. We can let go of things we need to forgive just like we let go of feeling angry! **[Bottom Line]** Since God forgave you, you should forgive others and let it go!"

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**PRAY AND SEND**

