



MARCH THEME

DIY

Forgiveness Is Up To You

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 5:1-2; 23-24

Step by Step | Jesus Teaches on Forgiveness

Spark Story Bible, pg. 272-273

Jesus Teaches About Anger

BOTTOM LINE

Take the first step to 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

FOR LEADERS ONLY

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

Key Question: What is keeping you from forgiving? Sometimes it's hard to forgive. Maybe our feelings are really hurt. Maybe we're physically hurt. When others hurt us, it's sometimes hard to let go of how they made us feel. We hope families understand how even if they might never have a perfect relationship with others, they can still work to make things right.

Jesus brought his followers to a mountain to explain to them what it means to live as part of God's kingdom. During that message, he said something important about forgiveness. In **Matthew 5:23-24** Jesus said, “Suppose you are offering your gift at the altar. And you remember that your brother or sister has something against you. Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and make peace with them. Then come back and offer your gift.” Jesus is teaching us that we should seek to make things right with others before trying to worship God.

Bottom Line: Take the first step to forgive others. Forgiveness is important to God. If we are in a difficult situation with someone, we should seek to make it right with them. While there are some relationships that might never be fully restored, we can at least try to offer and show forgiveness to others in our 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 group member by name. Pray that your group would learn something new about God and learn something new about forgiveness. Ask God to give them courage to be brave and take a step toward forgiveness with their friends and family.

•• JUST FOR FUN

Made to move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: “Step Out Cards”

What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Create a start and a turn-around spot on opposite sides of your space by setting chairs in each location.
- Line up teams at the start line.
- Put the “Step Out Cards” in your emptied-out small group bin and stand at the start line holding the bin.
- Explain that kids will compete in a relay race. To play:
—When you say “GO,” a kid from each team draws a “Step Out Card,” which will tell



them how they must “step” for their leg of the relay.

—Kids read their card, return it to the bucket, and then race to the turn-around line and back to their team, moving in the style indicated on the card they drew.

—When kids return to their team, they tag the next kid in line.

—Once tagged, the next kid draws a card, reads it, and races to the turn-around line and back.

—Once everyone has raced, the team sits down.

—The first team to sit down wins.

●● GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: “First Step” activity page, pens

What You Do:

- Pair kids up and give each pair a “First Step” activity page.
- Tell teams to make a list of what is wrong in the picture.
- Encourage teams to decide what would be the first thing they would fix.
- Allow teams time to share what they would fix first and why.

What You Say: “There were a lot of things that needed to be fixed. Sometimes, when we are faced with a lot of options, it is difficult to decide what our first step should be. [Transition] **Today in Sunday CM Worship/WOW Family Worship, we are going to learn/we learned about a first step that we should always be ready to take.**”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to Fellowship Hall for Children’s Ministry 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.

●● TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Talk About God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their own understanding

What You Need: “Scenario Cards,” masking tape

What You Do:

- Create a line on your small group table with masking tape. On one end write the word “EASY” and on the other end write “HARD”
- Encourage your group to read each “Scenario Card” and place the card on the tape to show whether it would be easy or hard to show forgiveness (*or somewhere in between*).
- Use the following questions to facilitate discussion on why your group placed the cards where they did. Was there any disagreement among group members as to where the card belonged?
 - When is it hard to forgive someone?
 - Is it easier to forgive someone you like or someone who annoys you?
 - How do your feelings affect how easy it is to forgive someone? Is it easy to forgive someone when you are angry?
 - What about if you have already forgiven them and they keep doing the same thing?

●● BIBLE STORY EXTENSION [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



What You Need: “Who, What, When, Why?” activity pages, pens

What You Do:

- Pass out a “Who, What, When, Why?” activity page and a pen to each kid.
 - Ask for a volunteer to read the verses on the top to the group.
 - Discuss the verses and ask the questions below.
 - As you answer them together, encourage the kids to write down their own answers in the appropriate spot on their activity page.
- WHO: Who is this verse talking about? (*Us*)
—WHAT: What are these verses saying? (*Forgive first and be quick to forgive*)
—WHEN: When should we do this? (*BEFORE anything else*)
—WHY: Why is this an important truth to apply to our lives? (*Because forgiveness fixes the relationship*)

What You Say: “When you read your Bible, it’s important to ask questions like these. Who is this written to? What is it saying? When should I do this? Why is it important? Today’s verses remind us that forgiveness fixes things. Why is it hard sometimes to ask for forgiveness or to forgive someone else? Do you sometimes just want to stay mad? How does choosing to stay mad hurt your relationship with others? (*Allow a few moments for kids to respond.*)

“Before we do anything else—even before we worship God—we should make things right. When we’ve hurt someone, the first thing we should do is to ask for forgiveness. When someone hurts us and wants forgiveness, we should give it! Jesus tells us that forgiveness comes first. Refusing to forgive or make things right not only hurts our relationship with others, it also hurts our relationship with God. God loves you and has forgiven you. Let’s **[Bottom Line]** take the first step to forgive others.”

[Make it Personal] (*Tell your group about a time when you chose to forgive someone instead of holding onto your anger. If you could share an example from around the time you were the age of the kids in your group, that would be ideal. Either way, make sure your example is age-appropriate.*)

●● **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask the following questions...
- When is it hard to forgive someone? What can keep us from forgiving someone?
—What are things people do when they hold a grudge?
—What have you learned that can help you to take the first step to forgive? How can knowing we are all created in God’s image help you to forgive others?

●● **VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Balloon

What You Do:

- Tell your group to form a line, with each kid standing about two feet behind the kid in front of them.
- Give the first kid in line an inflated balloon.
- To play the memory verse relay:
—When you say “GO,” the first kid passes the balloon “over” their head to the kid behind them. The next kid in line passes the balloon “under” their legs to the next kid in line. Kids continue follow that pattern until the balloon reaches the end of the line.
—Once the balloon reaches the end of the line, the group turns around and faces the opposite wall and kids continue to pass the

