

MARCH THEME

DIY

Forgiveness Is Up To You

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 18:21-35

Mercy Mercy Me | The Unmerciful
Servant

BOTTOM LINE

Forgive others because God forgives
you

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: Why does forgiveness matter? As we grow up, we're used to adults tell-
ing us to say we're sorry or that we're forgiven. However, it's also important to learn
why choosing to forgive others is important. We hope that families start to understand
that the way they forgive others can reflect how much God forgives us.

We start the month with one of Jesus' parables recorded in **Matthew 18:21-35**. Jesus
told this parable because Peter asked a question about forgiveness. Peter might have
thought he was doing pretty well to say he'd forgive someone seven times, but Jesus
raises the stakes and says we ought to forgive others even more. Jesus shows what this
means with a parable about a servant who is shown incredible forgiveness yet doesn't
do the same in return.

Bottom Line: Forgive others because God forgives you. God's love for us is huge. That
love drives God to forgive us when we do something wrong. When we realize how
much God has forgiven us, we can turn around and forgive others. This might be dif-
ficult, but God can give us the help we need to love others and show forgiveness.

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. Ask God to help kids under-
stand the very big and abstract concept of forgiveness. Thank God for first forgiving
us. Pray that your group would be encouraged to forgive others as a response to being
forgiven by God.

•• EARLY ARRIVER

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

What You Need: “Forgiveness” coloring pages, crayons

What You Do:

- As kids arrive, greet them by name and hand them a “Forgiveness” coloring page. Set
out crayons where everybody can share them.
- Encourage kids to draw happy faces on the kids in the picture.
- As kids color, explain the concept of forgiveness: deciding that someone who has
wronged you doesn't have to pay. Give some examples of times when kids their age
need to forgive one another.
- Ask:
 - How does it make you feel to be forgiven for something you did wrong?
 - How does it make you feel to forgive someone for hurting you?

•• **“MOTHER, MAY I BORROW...”**

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

What You Need: “Coins” activity cards

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into three groups to play a game similar to “Go Fish.”
- Divide the coins between the three teams and pick a team to go first.
- During their turn, one team says to another team, “Mother, may I borrow . . .” and they insert a coin amount (*number printed on coin*), based on whatever coins they already have.
- Each time a match is made, kids put those coins down in front of them and those coins are now “out of play.”
- The goal is for each team to match as many coins as they can.
- Keep going until one team has no coins without matches left.
- The team with the most matches at the end is the winner.
- Redistribute the coins and play again as time allows.

What You Say: “Wow, that was a fun game! You guys are so good at matching up all the coins! [Transition] Today in Sunday CM Worship/WOW Family Worship, we are going to hear/we heard a story from the Bible about someone who borrowed from a king and couldn’t quite give it back!”

[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.

•• **CREATE A CROWN** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building and designing

What You Need: “Crown Template” activity pages, crayons, scissors, tape

What You Do:

- Hand out “Crown Templates.” Set out crayons where everybody can share them.
- Let kids decorate their crowns, and remind them to write their names on their crowns.
- While the kids are decorating, use the paragraphs below to lead them in a conversation about what it means to forgive someone else.
- After the kids are done coloring, help kids cut out their crown and tape it together to fit their head.

What You Say: “When someone does something wrong to us, or something we don’t like, what do we usually want to do? (*get back at them; do the same thing back; be mad; not be nice to them*) But that’s not what God wants us to do, is it? What does God want us to do instead? (*forgive them; not do something mean in return*)

“Just like the king forgave the servant, we can forgive others. When you take your crown home, put it somewhere you will see it every day. Let it be a reminder of how the king forgave the servant, how God forgives us, and because we are forgiven, we can forgive each other. Remember, [Bottom Line] **Forgive others because God forgives you.**

•• **KING FOR A DAY** [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: Completed crown from “Create a Crown” activity

What You Do:

- Tell the kids that you are going to work together to retell the Bible story and everyone will get a chance to play a part.

NOTE: Don't force anyone to play a part if they don't want to. This is also a great opportunity to encourage self-control, by telling kids you can only give parts to kids who are "ready for the job."

- Pick one child to be king and have them put on the king's crown.
- Pick one child to play the servant and one to play the role of the man who owed the servant money.
- Work together to retell the story (*see points below*) while the kids act it out.
- Tell the story again a few more times, giving a part to everyone who wants one.

Story Points:

- Jesus was telling a story to Peter about forgiveness
- The servant owed the king 10,000 bags of gold.
- The king asked the servant to pay him back and he couldn't (*king points his/her pointer finger at the servant like he's scolding him/her*).
- The servant begged the king for more time (*servant goes down on their knees with their hands folded in front of their chest in a begging position*).
- The king said the servant didn't have to pay him back, and he let him go (*king helps the servant up and gives him/her a hug*).
- The servant went to a man who owed him money and demanded that he pay him back in full (*servant points his/her pointer finger at the man like he's scolding him/her*).
- The man begged for more time, but the servant didn't erase the debt like the king did (*man goes down on their knees with their hands folded in front of their chest in a begging position; servant keeps pointing their pointer finger at the man*).
- The king found out that the servant didn't forgive the debt like the king did for him, so the king was very mad (*the king puts his/her hands on his/her hips and shakes his/her head in sadness*).
- God wants us to forgive others just like the king forgave the servant and like God forgives us (*everyone gives high fives because we've all been forgiven*).

What You Say: "Great job remembering our story today. We can learn a lot from the king in the story, can't we? He forgave the servant and expected nothing back. Just like the king, God forgives us no matter what, and God wants us to do the same with our friends and family. Remember that you can **[Bottom Line] forgive others because God forgives you.**"

[Make It Personal] *(Tell about a child-appropriate time when you forgave someone or when someone decided to forgive you. Share how it made you feel.)*

•• MEMORY VERSE TEAMWORK [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Look up the memory verse using the tips below and read it twice together as a group.

Finding verses with kindergartners + 1st graders: Open the Bible to the front and show them the table of contents. Show them how to find Colossians in the list under "New Testament." Show them how to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Colossians. Open the Bible to the correct page. Explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 13 in chapter 3.

- Teach the group the motions (*suggestions below*) for the entire verse. Do this a few times, prompting them to copy you as you say the verse.
- Split the group into 3 teams.
- Assign each team a different part of the verse.



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SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE