



MARCH THEME

DIY
Forgiveness Is Up To You

BIBLE STORY

Luke 19:1-10
Everything Has Changed | Zacchaeus
Spark Story Bible, pg. 400-405
Zacchaeus

BOTTOM LINE

When you forgive others, it can change them

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 does it feel like to be forgiven? When it comes to forgiving others, often it helps to put yourself in the other person's shoes. When we remember what it feels like to have others forgive us, it can help us turn around and forgive people in our life. This week, we hope families have great conversations about the times people have forgiven them.

In week two, we find Jesus interacting with an unexpected person in **Luke 19:1-10:** Zacchaeus. He was a tax collector working for Rome. He earned a reputation for taking advantage of his fellow Jews. Zacchaeus was considered an outcast by many. He must have been shocked when Jesus asked to come over for a meal. But when Zacchaeus encountered Jesus, he changed. He went back to those people, asked forgiveness, and returned four times as much money as he took from them.

Bottom Line: When you forgive others, it can change them. When God forgives us, it changes us from the inside out. The same can be true when we forgive others. We never know what can happen when we take the first step toward forgiveness. When we decide to reach out and offer forgiveness, it can change the way they see us, the situation, and the impact of their actions. When we forgive, we have the opportunity to share the forgiveness we've been given and point others to God.

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. Thank God for the moments when you and your relationships have been changed because of forgiveness. Pray that kids would take what they learn today and put it into practice, so that they, too, can experience the life change God has to offer through forgiveness.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

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

What You Need: Copy paper, markers, pens

What You Do:

- Give each child a piece of copy paper. Set out markers and pens where everybody can share them.
- Encourage your group to draw or write about something that happened this week.
- As kids finish, let them share about what they drew or wrote.
- If time allows, have kids turn their papers over and draw/write/share about another event from their week.



●● **FIND THE DIFFERENCES**

Made to Explore | An activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: “Find the Differences” activity pages, pens

What You Do:

- As a group, work together to find the differences between the similar pictures.

What You Say: “Even though the pictures seem to look almost exactly the same, when we look closely, we can find many differences between them! **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM Worship/WOW Family Worship, we are going to hear/we heard a story about a man who changed a lot on the inside, even though he didn’t look any different on the outside.”**

[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.

●● **JESUS MEETS ZACCHAEUS** [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: “Bible Story” cards, Bible

What You Do:

- Turn in your Bible to Luke 19:1-10.
- Hold up each activity card (*coin, tree, Zacchaeus, food*) and let kids explain how these items fit into what happened in today’s Bible story.
- Then read Luke 19:1-10 to see if they are correct!

What You Say: “Zacchaeus was basically a thief, taking more from people than what they actually owed and keeping the extra for himself. I would imagine that most people really disliked him because of his dishonesty. But then Jesus came to town. He called Zacchaeus down out of that tree and basically invited himself over for a visit. What happened after Jesus spent time with Zacchaeus? (*pause for ideas*) Yes! He was changed forever! Why? Because Jesus chose to forgive him, even though Zacchaeus had hurt a lot of people. And because of that forgiveness, Zacchaeus’ heart was changed and he gave half of what he owned to the poor and paid back everyone he’d stolen from FOUR times what he owed! Talk about a big change! **[Bottom Line] When you forgive others, it can change them.”**

●● **EMOJI EMOTIONS** [Talk about God | Application Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: “Emojis” activity pages

What You Do:

- Lay the “Emojis” in a 2x3 grid on your small group table.
- Ask the group what feelings they associate with each emoji, e.g. happy, sad, surprised, angry, thankful, confused.



- Read a scenario listed below.
- When you say “How do you feel?” instruct kids to “slap” an emoji that represents how they would feel in the scenario you read.
- Allow kids an opportunity to share why they selected the “Emoji” they did, especially if multiple “Emojis” were selected.
- Scenarios:
 - You and your friend get to go see a movie that you have been wanting to see. How do you feel?
 - You and your friend get in a fight and your friend says something mean to you. How do you feel?
 - Your friend apologizes. How do you feel?
 - You and your friend get in a fight and you say something mean to your friend. How do you feel?
 - You say you are sorry and your friend doesn’t forgive you. How do you feel?
 - You say you are sorry and your friend forgives you. How do you feel?
- Ask kids to describe the difference between how it feels when someone forgives you and when someone holds a grudge against you.

[Make It Personal] *(Share an age-appropriate example of a time you were forgiven. Maybe you told a friend you would meet them for lunch and you forgot and didn’t show up. Or you were angry and said something unkind to your brother and you felt bad but your brother forgave you and didn’t try to get even. Share how it felt to be forgiven. Allow kids to share a time they were forgiven too and how it felt to be forgiven.)*

•• **COIN COLLECTING** [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: 2 “Blank Coins” activity pages, Bible, scissors, markers, pens

What You Do:

- Review Colossians 3:13 together as a group.
- Divide your group into two teams.
- Pass out the “Blank Coins” activity pages.
- Encourage each team to work together to write down the words/phrases of the verse on their coins.
 - Each team can decide on their own how to divide the verse. The only guideline is that they must break it down to fit on 10 coins, including the verse reference.
- Instruct teams to cut their coins apart on the lines.
- As teams finish, shuffle the coins and set them on one side of your small group area.
- Line up the teams across from their stack of coins.
- On “Go!” the first player from each team will run to their coin pile, grab a coin, and return to tag the next kid in line.
- Teams continue in the same way until all coins have been collected.
- Once a team has retrieved all its coins, they work together to put their verse in order and then sit down and raise their hands to indicate they’re finished.
- The first team to put all their coins in the correct order wins!

What You Say: “‘Put up with one another’ is a kind of funny phrase, isn’t it? But sometimes we need to do just that. Everyone messes up sometimes and says things they don’t really mean or does something selfish to get their way. And sometimes other people’s choices hurt us. But God tells us to forgive and let go if we’re holding on to something against someone. Let’s remember how good it feels to be forgiven. Let’s choose to forgive with God’s help knowing that **[Bottom Line]** when you forgive others, it can change them.”

PRAY AND SEND

