

Forgiving One Another

Lesson
23

Purpose To help each child desire to follow the commandment to forgive others.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 64:9.
2. Write the word *angry* or *happy* on the back of the appropriate face cutout (cutout 3-6).
3. Be prepared to help the class review the story of Alma the Younger (see Mosiah 27; lesson 22).
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Doctrine and Covenants.
 - b. Cutouts of Alma the Younger (cutout 3-3), the four sons of Mosiah (cutout 3-4), and the angry and happy faces (cutout 3-6).
 - c. A red- or scarlet-colored item, such as a piece of cloth or paper, and a white one. Make sure the white item is as clean as possible.
5. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities that you will be using.

**Suggested
Lesson
Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

We Can Follow Jesus Christ

Attention activity

Tell the children that you would like them to do what you do. Have them follow you as you stand, stretch, smile, sit down, and fold your arms.

Explain that because they did everything you did, they were following you. If you follow someone, you do the same things he does.

Tell them that you are going to help them learn a very important way that they can follow Jesus.

Jesus Christ Loves and Forgives Us

Story review

Ask the class to briefly tell about Alma the Younger's conversion as well as they can. They might want to use the cutouts.

Help them bring out the following:

1. At first Alma did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Savior. He talked people into doing many wicked things. He taught that the commandments and the Church of Jesus Christ were not true.

- How do you think Alma's father and the members of the Church felt?

2. Even though Alma was very wicked and did many things that were wrong, Jesus Christ still loved him.
 - How did Jesus show his love for Alma the Younger? (He commanded him to repent; see Mosiah 27:11–16. Jesus also showed his love by atoning for all sins. This made it possible for Alma to repent and be forgiven.)
 - How did Alma’s father and the people of the Church show their love for Alma? (They prayed and fasted for his recovery; see Mosiah 27:21–24.)
3. Alma the Younger felt sorry for what he had done and repented.
 - What did Jesus Christ do after Alma the Younger repented? (He forgave Alma; see Mosiah 27:28.)
 - What did Alma the Younger do after he repented? (He traveled throughout the land and told the people what had happened to him. He taught them the truth about Jesus Christ and the Church; see Mosiah 27:32.)

Explain that just as Jesus Christ loved and forgave Alma the Younger, He always loves us and will forgive us when we repent for what we do wrong.

We Should Forgive Others

Discussion

- How do you feel when someone pushes you down or hurts you?
- How do you feel when someone makes fun of you or calls you names?
- How do you feel when other children won’t let you play with them?
- How do you feel when someone breaks something that belongs to you?

Allow responses for each question. Explain that when someone treats us unkindly or hurts us, we usually feel angry or hurt inside.

Put up the angry face cutout. (Older classes may use the word side of the circle.)

Discuss with the children how they feel when they are angry. Try to emphasize how unhappy they feel when they are angry with someone.

- What does this angry feeling make you want to do? (Try to emphasize that anger does not make us want to act like Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ want us to act.)

Explain that Jesus has told us that we should forgive others just as he forgives us. He knows that it is not always easy to forgive others when we have been hurt, but he wants us to follow his example.

- What does it mean to forgive? (When the Savior forgives us, he cancels any required punishment for a sin that we have committed, if we repent. He helps us to live more righteously. When we forgive others, we love them and do not have bad feelings for them because of any wrong they have done to us.)

Show the children the item that is colored bright red or scarlet. Then read to them the following from Isaiah 1:18: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

- What do you think this verse means? (Remind the children that white is a color often used to represent purity.)

Replace the red item with a white one. Explain that just as you have replaced a red item with a white one that symbolizes purity, so will the Savior make the person who repents pure and clean.

Have an older child read the following from Doctrine and Covenants 64:9, or read it yourself: “Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another.”

- When others hurt us or are unkind in some way, what must we do to follow the commandment of Jesus Christ to forgive? (Forgive them and love them.)

Explain that to be loving and forgiving, we must—

1. Get rid of the feeling of anger and the desire to take revenge on the other person.
2. Forget the unkindness.
3. Treat the person with kindness and love.

Point out that when we really forgive others, we are willing to forget the wrong that they have done and replace our angry feelings with kind, loving feelings. Forgiving other people includes showing great love for them after forgiving them.

Cover the angry face with the happy face (or use the word side of the circle).

Story and
discussion

Tell the children the following story about a boy named John. Ask them to try to imagine how they would feel and what they might do if they were in John’s place.

“John was not as big as the other boys. Some of the boys would tease him because he was so short. A big boy named Paul always made fun of him and pushed him around.”

- How do you think John must have felt? (Unhappy and angry.)

“One day John was hiking up a mountainside, looking for unusual rocks. He was [making] a rock collection. . . . John had some beautiful rocks at home. He was searching for more. . . .

“Suddenly he heard a familiar voice. It was Paul. He was looking for rocks too. Paul told John to go away because he was there first. He started chasing John down the mountainside. . . . Soon John heard loud screams coming from higher up the hill. He ran back up and found Paul in terrible pain.” He had badly hurt his foot.

- How do you think John felt when Paul started to chase him and told him to leave?
- How do you think John might have felt when he saw that Paul had hurt his foot?

Have the children listen to the rest of the story and discover what John did:

“John tried to help Paul . . . , but he was not strong enough. . . . He made Paul as comfortable as he could and ran to get help.

“John brought his father back and together they were able to [bring] Paul . . . down from the mountain. [They] took him to their home. John’s mother helped

bandage Paul's foot. John offered to share his rock collection with Paul because Paul's rocks were lost in the fall.

"Paul apologized to John for the mean things he had done. John grinned, and they became [better] friends" (adapted from *Walk in His Ways: Basic Children's Manual, Part A* [1979], pp. 151–52).

- How did John follow the commandment to forgive? (He was forgiving and treated someone nicely who had been mean to him.)
- What did John do to show he was forgiving? (He tried to help Paul. He got his father to come and help Paul. He became Paul's friend.)
- Do you think it was easy for John to forget the mean things Paul had done to him and help Paul?

Point out that although it must have been very difficult for John to forget the mean things Paul had done, John followed the commandment of Jesus Christ and was forgiving.

Role playing

Have the children role-play one or more of the following situations. Allow all the children in your class to participate. Have them express the feelings they might have in the situation, and have them explain what they must do to follow the commandment to be forgiving. Try to help the children understand that they must replace the feelings of anger with feelings of love and kindness, forget the unkindness, and treat the person kindly. Use the questions after each situation as a guide.

1. Julie and Tammy are playing ball. Susan comes running by and knocks Julie down. The fall hurts her knee. Later that same day, Susan comes over to Julie's house and asks if she can play ball with Julie and Tammy.
 - How would Julie feel when Susan knocked her down?
 - What should Julie do to show she forgives Susan when Susan comes and asks to play ball? (Impress upon the children that we are to forgive everyone, even if they do not ask for forgiveness or even feel sorry for their wrongs.)
2. Andy and David are playing a game. Andy is winning the game. David becomes angry, pushes the game quickly from him, and rushes away. The next day David asks Andy to play the game again.
 - How do you think Andy feels when David pushes the game over?
 - What should Andy do when David wants to play the game again? (Again, stress that we must forgive everyone, whether or not they say "I'm sorry.")
3. On Alicia's way home from school, she stops to visit her cousin, Matt. She has a present for her mother in her hand. Matt grabs it away from her. He drops it and it breaks. That evening Matt comes and tells Alicia he is very sorry.
 - How would Alicia feel?
 - What should she do when Matt comes?

Summary

Teacher
presentation

Conclude by reminding the children that when we follow someone, we do the same things that person does. If we follow Jesus Christ, we must follow his commandment to forgive others. If appropriate, you might share with the children an experience you have had when you forgave someone and felt better for having done so. (Do not use the names of persons the children might know personally.) Have the children review what they must do to be forgiving:

1. We must get rid of angry feelings and the desire to be mean to the other person.
2. We must forget the unkindness.
3. We must treat the person with kindness and love.

Invite the children to remember to forgive others during the week and to come next week prepared to tell the class how they felt when they forgave someone.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for your children. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see “Class Time” in “Helps for the Teacher.”

1. Have younger children try to say a very large word, such as *hippopotamus*. Tell them that some words are hard to say. Explain that it can be hard to say “I forgive you” when someone makes us feel angry or sad. Tell the children that sometimes those three words can turn a sad feeling into a happy one.
2. Sing or say the words to “Help Me, Dear Father” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 99); the words are included at the back of this manual.
3. Do the following finger play with the children. (You might also place socks over your hands to make puppets and attach little eyes to the socks.)

Two little friends, one left and one right (hold up both hands with fists closed)
 Started to quarrel and started to fight. (wave fists at each other)
 Now these little friends were not happy that day,
 For they had been taught the right way to play.
 Then one little friend hid his head down in shame; (lower right fist from wrist and turn away)
 The other did too, for he felt just the same. (lower left fist and turn away also)
 The first friend said, “I know what I’ll do (clap hands)
 To show you I’m sorry. I’ll ask forgiveness of you.”
 “I too am really sorry,” the next one did say,
 “Let’s play and be happy the rest of the day.” (fold arms and sit down)
4. Make light pencil marks on a piece of paper (or chalk marks on a chalkboard) to represent wrong deeds and choices. Then erase them completely so that no marks remain. Explain that when we repent, it is as if Jesus Christ erases our sins so that no sign of them remains. (You might want to practice this before class.)