

I Can Forgive Others

Lesson
40

Purpose To help each child understand that happiness comes when we forgive others, as Jesus Christ did.

- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study Luke 23:13–34 and John 18:12–14, 19–24; 19:1–5.
 2. Prepare to sing or say the words to the first verse of “Help Me, Dear Father” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 99).
 3. Make the following wordstrip:

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
 4. Prepare to tell about a time when you forgave and how you felt about forgiving.
 5. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible.
 - b. CTR chart (see lesson 1).
 - c. Chalk, chalkboard, and eraser.
 - d. Picture 2-56, The Trial of Jesus; picture 2-61, The Crucifixion (Gospel Art Picture Kit 230; 62505).
 6. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities you want to use.
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**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. You may want to ask the children to report on their experiences with service.

We Can Forgive Others

Attention activity

Ask the children to listen carefully as you describe the following situation (adjust the situation as necessary to make it appropriate for the children in your class):

You are walking with a large load of books and papers (or other items) in your arms. Suddenly someone bumps into you. You fall down and drop the things you have been carrying. Your books and papers scatter all over the ground.

- Has something like this ever happened to you?
- How did you feel?

Tell the children that you are going to describe two different endings to this situation. Ask them to decide which is the better ending.

Ending 1

You are upset about falling and dropping all your things. When the person who ran into you apologizes and offers to help you pick up your books and papers, you say, “No!” in an angry voice and push him away. You hope that tomorrow you see him carrying a lot of things so you can knock him down.

Ending 2

You are upset about falling and dropping all your things. When the person who ran into you apologizes and offers to help you pick up your things, you say, “Thank you.” The two of you quickly pick up the books and papers. You tell the person that you know he didn’t mean to knock you down, and both of you walk away happy.

- Which is the better ending to the story?
- Why is the second ending better than the first?
- What should we do when someone does something that we don’t like or that makes us feel hurt or angry? (We should forgive them.)

Teacher presentation

Explain that to forgive someone means to feel love and kindness for that person even though they have done something that hurt us or made us angry. Sometimes it means we have to change our angry feelings toward that person to kind feelings. When we forgive others, we do not want to hurt them or get back at them. We are kind to them, even if they are not kind to us.

Jesus Christ Forgave Others

Scripture story

Show the Bible and tell the children that you are going to tell a story from the Bible about how Jesus Christ forgave those who hurt him. Tell the story of Christ’s trial and crucifixion, as found in Luke 23:13–34 and John 18:12–14, 19–24; 19:1–5.

Explain that after Jesus and his Apostles had eaten their last supper together, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray to Heavenly Father. After Jesus finished praying, some soldiers came, tied him with cords, and took him to the palace of the chief priest, where he was put on trial.

Show picture 2-56, The Trial of Jesus.

Point out that during the trial, the soldiers did many unkind things to Jesus. They hit him, whipped him, spit on him, put a crown of thorns on his head, and called him names. But Jesus did not become angry.

Show picture 2-61, The Crucifixion.

Tell the children that after the trial, the soldiers led Jesus to a place called Calvary and nailed him to a cross. Explain that Jesus wasn’t angry with the soldiers for what they had done to him. Instead he asked Heavenly Father to forgive the soldiers.

Scripture and wordstrip

Have the children listen to what Jesus said just before he died. Read aloud the first sentence of Luke 23:34.

Display the wordstrip and leave it up for the rest of the class period. Help the children repeat Jesus’ statement with you.

Point out that even though the soldiers were unkind to Jesus, he forgave them and asked Heavenly Father to forgive them.

Happiness Comes When We Forgive Others

Teacher presentation	Remind the children that when we are followers of Jesus Christ we try to do what he would do. Jesus always forgave those who were unkind to him. We should also forgive those who are unkind to us.
Song	<p>Sing or say the words to the first verse of “Help Me, Dear Father.” Ask the children to listen carefully to the words. Point out that the words are written like a prayer to help us feel how important it is to forgive others.</p> <p>Help me, dear Father, to freely forgive All who may seem unkind to me. Help me each day, Father, I pray; Help me live nearer, nearer to thee.</p> <p>Have the children stand and sing or say the words of the song with you. Encourage the children to think about the meaning of the words as they sing them.</p>
Story and discussion	<p>Tell the following story about a child who knew how to forgive:</p> <p>Kent’s mother had asked him to clean up the yard. He was raking up all the leaves and small branches that had fallen from the trees and plants in the yard. Kent worked hard, and finally he had gathered all the leaves and branches into one big pile. Just then Jed came down the street, ran into the pile, and kicked leaves and branches in every direction. All of Kent’s work was undone in a few seconds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think Kent felt when Jed did this? <p>Kent’s brother saw what Jed did. He thought that Kent should chase Jed and beat him up for scattering the pile of leaves and branches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could Kent do? <p>Help the children think of a few suggestions. Then finish the story:</p> <p>Kent did run after Jed. But instead of hitting Jed, Kent asked him if he had any work left to do that day. Jed nodded.</p> <p>Kent offered to help Jed with his work if Jed would help rake the leaves into a pile again. Jed agreed, and the two boys had a good time working together.</p>
Discussion	<p>Explain that if we forgive others and treat them kindly, as Kent treated Jed, we will feel happy inside. If we do not forgive, we will continue to feel hurt or angry, and we will not be happy. We need to forgive others so we can be happy.</p> <p>Describe some situations to the children, and discuss whether or not the child in the situation showed forgiveness. If the child described did not show forgiveness, ask the children what the child could do to show forgiveness and feel happy inside.</p> <p>Use the situations below or create some of your own:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jan had just finished drawing a beautiful picture when her little brother came and scribbled all over it with a crayon. Jan was so upset that she yelled and slapped her brother’s hand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did Jan show forgiveness? • How do you think Jan felt inside? • What could Jan do to show forgiveness to her brother?

2. On the playground, Donna came up to Cali and pushed her down. Donna ran away laughing. The next day, Donna fell out of the swing and hurt her knee. Cali rushed over and helped her up.
 - Did Cali show forgiveness?
 - How do you think Cali felt inside?
3. When Chad was waiting to get a drink of water from the fountain, the boy in front of him turned and threw water on him. Chad's face was all wet, but he just turned and walked away without saying a word. The next day when Chad was getting a drink, the same boy walked by. Chad could have thrown water on the boy, but he didn't.
 - Did Chad show forgiveness?
 - How do you think Chad felt inside?

Summary

Review activity

List the numbers from 1 to 8 on the chalkboard. Let the children take turns erasing a number and answering the review question that corresponds with that number. If you have a large class, you may need to make up more questions.

1. What does it mean to forgive others?
2. How did Jesus Christ act toward the soldiers who hung him on the cross?
3. What did Jesus Christ ask Heavenly Father to do for the soldiers?
4. How do you think Kent felt when Jed kicked the pile of leaves?
5. How did Kent show forgiveness to Jed?
6. How do you think Kent felt when he forgave Jed?
7. How do you think Jed felt when Kent was kind to him instead of seeking revenge?
8. How will we feel when we forgive those who have been unkind to us?

CTR chart and ring

Display the CTR chart. Have the children repeat the words on the chart. Help the children understand that when we forgive others as Jesus did we are choosing the right.

Have the children look at their CTR rings if they are wearing them. Tell them that their rings can help remind them to choose the right by forgiving others.

Testimony

Testify that we can be happy when we forgive others and treat them kindly. Tell about a time when you chose the right and forgave someone. Explain how you felt toward that person because you were willing to forgive.

If time allows, let the children talk about times when they have forgiven someone.

Encourage the children to make a special effort to forgive others this week. Suggest that the children discuss forgiveness with their families.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer. Suggest that the child ask Heavenly Father to help the children forgive others.

**Enrichment
Activities**

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for the children in your class. 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. Bring a large bag and some rocks. Discuss with the children how we often become angry or seek revenge when people have been unkind to us. During this discussion, put the rocks in the bag one by one.

When the bag has a number of rocks in it, let the children take turns carrying it around. Ask them to try to clap their hands or give someone a hug while carrying the bag. Explain that being angry at others for the unkind things that they have done is like carrying a bag of rocks. It is a heavy burden for us.

Have the children say “I will forgive” a few times as you take the rocks out of the bag. Then have the children carry the bag again. Explain that when we forgive others, we no longer have to carry a heavy burden. We feel much happier when we forgive.

2. Sing or say the words to “Do As I’m Doing” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 276). The words to this song are included at the back of the manual.

Repeat the song a few times, letting the children take turns choosing an action to do. Remind the children that when we follow someone, we do what they do. If we want to be followers of Jesus Christ, we should do what he does, including showing forgiveness to those who are unkind to us.

3. Tell the story of Joseph and his brothers, as found in Genesis 37 and 41–45. You may want to have the children act out the story. Discuss with the children how Joseph forgave his brothers (see Genesis 45:1–15).
4. Make for each child a copy of the picture at the end of the lesson. Give the children crayons or pencils and have them draw happy faces on the children in the picture. Then let them color the pictures. Ask the children to take the pictures home and put the pictures where they will remind them to forgive others.
5. Have the children role-play the story about Kent and the three situations on pages 219–20 of the lesson (in the first situation, have the children act out how Jan could show forgiveness to her brother). Or create some similar situations more appropriate for the children in your class and have the children act them out.

Forgiving Makes Us Happy

