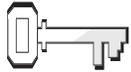


Finally Forgiven



References

Genesis 42-45:15;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 224-231



Memory Verse

"Forgive, and you
will be forgiven"
(Luke 6:37).

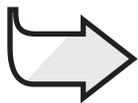


Objectives

The children will:
Know that God will
help His children
forgive those who mistreat them.

Feel a desire to forgive oth-
ers as God forgives them.

Respond by forgiving
those who mistreat them.



The Message

God helps me to
forgive others.

Monthly Theme

We learn Christian values.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Just as Joseph has predicted, Egypt produces much food for seven years. Joseph is prepared for the famine that affects all that part of the world. Jacob's sons come to Egypt to buy some of the grain from Joseph's storehouses. Joseph recognizes his brothers when they come to buy food, but they don't recognize him. Joseph calls them spies, imprisons them for three days, then releases them to go home and get their younger brother. Joseph keeps Simeon in prison. Jacob finally consents to send Benjamin back with the 10 brothers when the families run out of food again. When they return to Egypt with Benjamin, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and forgives them.

This is a lesson about community.

As Joseph forgave his brothers' cruelty, so members of a Christian home and a Christian community of faith can also forgive one another.

Teacher Enrichment

"There are few who realize the influence of the little things of life upon the development of character. Nothing which we have to do is really small. The varied circumstances that we meet day by day are designed to test our faithfulness and to qualify us for greater trusts. By adherence to principle in the transactions of ordinary life, the mind becomes accustomed to hold the claims of duty above those of pleasure and inclination. . . . By faithfulness in that which is least they acquire strength to be faithful in greater matters" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 222, 223).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Checklist</i> B. <i>It Comes Back</i>	paper, pencils, list of excuses, Bibles paddle ball toy or ball to bounce, Bibles
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering device none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	large sack of grain, "silver" cup, microphone or facsimile, adult "Simeon," Bible-times costumes, "Egyptian" news reporter Bibles, memory verse in sign language (see p. 125) Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Forgiven to Forgive</i>	pencils, paper, two trash containers, Bibles
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Cup of Forgiveness</i>	paper cups, aluminum foil, pencils

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils
- list of excuses for each child
- Bibles

A. Checklist

In advance, prepare a list of excuses with which the children can identify. Ideas might include:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| They were mean. | They didn't ask me to forgive them. |
| It wasn't my fault. | It's just my brother/sister. |
| They started it. | |

Give each child a list and ask them to circle the things that might keep them from forgiving members of their home or church family.

Debriefing

Ask: **What are some of the reasons not to forgive someone?** (Accept answers they circled.) **How does it feel when you choose not to forgive someone?** (angry, strong, mean) **What is the only way to get rid of the things that keep us from forgiving others?** (Ask for Jesus' help.) **What happens when we are finally willing to forgive? Let's find and read our memory verse, Luke 6:37.** Read aloud together.

Today's message is:



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- paddle ball toy (paddle, small rubber ball, elastic string) or ball children can bounce
- Bibles

B. It Comes Back

Have children sit in a circle. (In a large church, have students in small groups, each with a paddle ball and a facilitator.) Hit the paddle ball several times, pointing out how the ball always comes back. If a paddle ball is not available, substitute any ball that children can bounce.

Ask: **Has someone ever said or done something that made you feel bad? Did you forgive that person? Why or why not? What do you think God wants us to do when someone is rude and hurtful to us?** Read 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 to the children, asking them to put their hands over their hearts when they think they know what God wants us to do. Then ask what it is. Read verse 7 again.

Say: **It is important to forgive others even when they have made us feel bad. And God promises that when we forgive others, forgiveness will come back to us—just like this ball!** Paddle the ball one more time.

Explain that you will begin a prayer, asking for God's help to forgive others. You will stop during the prayer and each person will have a turn to bounce the ball once

while they think about someone they should forgive; then pass the ball to the next person. Remind them to be quiet and reverent as each person has a turn.

Pray: **Dear God, we know that sometimes people say or do things that hurt us. And we know You want us to forgive them. Please help me forgive** (pass the paddle ball around the circle as each child thinks of someone they would like to forgive). **We're so glad You forgive and love us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What happens when we forgive someone?** (Forgiveness bounces back to us.) **Let's find and read our memory verse, Luke 6:37.** Read aloud together. **We must remember that only God can really help us have a forgiving spirit. That is what this week's message is about.**



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

Say that with me.

Adapted from *The Children's Worker's Encyclopedia of Bible Teaching Ideas: New Testament* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1997), pp. 124, 125.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "A Happy Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 136)
- "Love at Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 137)
- "Sorry Song" (see p. 127)
- "God Bless Families" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 138)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **God used Joseph to help meet the needs of many people. God can use your gifts to help those in need too.**

You Need:
• offering device



Prayer

Refer to the prayer you prayed in Readiness B (or pray it now). Ask for special prayer requests and mention them specifically in a short prayer.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- large sack of grain
- “silver” cup
- microphone or facsimile
- adult “Simeon”
- Bible-times costumes for two adults
- Egyptian news reporter

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Simeon, Egyptian News Reporter

Props: sack of grain with “silver cup,” microphone or facsimile

Egyptian news reporter talks into a “mike” and holds it for Simeon when it’s his turn to talk.

Have two adults read or tell the story.

Egyptian news reporter: [holding microphone] Good morning. This is a special report on the return of Governor Joseph’s brothers to Egypt. Simeon, one of his brothers, is here to tell some of the latest happenings in this developing story. Welcome, Mr. Simeon.

Simeon: Thank you, sir.

Egyptian news reporter: Mr. Simeon, much has happened since you and your brothers first came to Egypt in search of food. We have learned that Governor Joseph has just told you all that he is your brother. Can you tell us more about this?

Simeon: First of all, we were very scared when Joseph said he was our brother.

Egyptian news reporter: Why?

Simeon: It is a long story, but I’ll tell you this. When Joseph was a boy, our father treated him better than he treated us. And Joseph would always tell our father things we did that would get us in trouble. As a result, we hated Joseph so much that we sold him as a slave to some traders going to Egypt.

Egyptian news reporter: So that’s how he got here! I have been following his story since then [turning to the audience]. Joseph’s master, Potiphar, sent him to prison. But Pharaoh made him gover-

nor of Egypt after he explained a dream. Everything that Governor Joseph predicted has happened according to what God revealed to him. First there were seven years of wonderful crops. But these past two years have been awful. No food will grow. There will be five more years like this, he says. It is good that Governor Joseph has plenty of food to sell.

Simeon: That is why we came. Our family was starving. We went to the governor to buy some food. He recognized us when we bowed before him. But we didn’t recognize him. The last time we had been together was when we sold him as a slave many years ago.

Egyptian news reporter: How did the governor treat you?

Simeon: He said that we were all spies. We were all put in prison for three days. Then I was kept in prison while the governor sent the others back home to get our younger brother. By the way, your jail is terrible!

Egyptian news reporter: I know. Then what happened?

Simeon: On the way home, one of my brothers found the money he had used to buy grain in his sack. When they got home, the others found their money in their sacks too. They wondered what the governor would do about that! If they returned to Egypt, would he put them all in prison? And our father was worried about our younger brother. He refused to let him go back to Egypt with the rest of us. But when our family ran out of food again, and my brothers had to come, he finally agreed to let Benjamin go with them. But he wasn’t happy about it.

Egyptian news reporter: When you brought your younger brother to the governor, what happened?

Simeon: He invited us to his house

for dinner, and gave Benjamin much more food than the rest of us. But there is more. When we left to go back home, the governor's steward stopped us not far from Governor Joseph's palace. He said that we stole Governor Joseph's silver cup! Can you imagine that? Then the steward searched our sacks and found Joseph's cup in Benjamin's sack! I still have the sack and cup right here to show you. [Have Simeon show sack of grain with silver cup.] The steward arrested Benjamin and said he had to go back to Joseph. So we all went back to Governor Joseph's palace. When Joseph told us that Benjamin would become his slave, we were really worried. What would we tell our father?

Egyptian news reporter: Things could not be any worse than that! What did you do?

Simeon: Our brother Judah begged Governor Joseph to let Benjamin go. Judah said he couldn't go back to our father if Benjamin wasn't with us. He offered to stay as a slave in Benjamin's place.

Egyptian news reporter: When did Joseph tell you who he was?

Simeon: After Judah made his speech, our brother Joseph broke into tears and told us who he really was, and that he had been testing us. He told us about Potiphar's house, about prison, and about how he had come to be the second most powerful man in Egypt. We were so scared! We could not believe that Joseph would forgive us for all the wrong we did to him. God makes forgiveness possible.

Egyptian news reporter: Thank you, Mr. Simeon, for sharing your amazing story and being on our program today.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:
Why was Joseph made governor of Egypt? (God helped him interpret Pharaoh's dreams; God led him to that

position through unusual circumstances.)

At first, did Joseph's brothers recognize him? (No.) **How did they react when they found out? Why?** (They were afraid; they knew they had done wrong.) **How did Joseph test his brothers?**

Why was Joseph able to forgive his brothers? (God gave him love, grace, and power to do so.) **How can you forgive people who hurt you?** (Ask God to help you; pray for them and yourself; ask God to change your heart and take away bitterness or anger.)

We all need forgiveness for the wrong things we do. Who will help us? (God) **What does He promise us in our memory verse?** ("Forgive, and you will be forgiven.") **Remember, today's message tells us . . .**



Forgive



and you



will be



forgiven.



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

Memory Verse

Have the children find and read the memory verse (Luke 6:37) aloud as you demonstrate the sign language. Teach the sign language as you teach the verse. Have the children form pairs and practice signing and saying the verse to each other until they know it well.

You Need:

- Bibles
- memory verse in sign language

Bible Study

Have the children read in Genesis 45:1-8 about Joseph forgiving his brothers. Adults assist as necessary. Divide the class in half. Have one half read what Joseph says and the other half read what Joseph does.

You Need:

- Bibles

Debriefing

Ask: **What is your favorite part of the story of Joseph so far?** (when Joseph forgave his brothers; when he told them who he was, etc.) **Why did Joseph's brothers have trouble feeling forgiven?** (They had been very cruel to Joseph.) **Imagine how Joseph's brothers felt when Joseph didn't punish them,**

but forgave them instead. Share your thoughts. (Allow time.) **Forgiving isn't natural for us. How are we able to forgive?** (God will help us and give us power.)

Let's read a prayer about forgiveness in **Luke 11:4**. Read aloud together. **Now let's say today's message:**



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- pencils
- paper
- two trash containers
- Bibles

Forgiven to Forgive

Place the trash containers at opposite ends of your classroom, labeling one "east" and the other "west." The children will write something for which they want to ask forgiveness. Direct them to take the paper and throw it into one of the trash containers. Then ask the children to write something for which they need to forgive someone else and take it to the other trash container.

Debriefing

Say: **God says that He throws our sins as far away as the east is from the west. Let's read Psalm 103:12.** (Appoint a child to read.) **Because He is so good to forgive us, He asks us to forgive each other.** Read Colossians 3:13. **How many of our sins does Jesus forgive? Let's read Psalm 103:3.** (He forgives all our sins.) **How many wrongs should we forgive?** (all) **Let's say today's message:**



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- paper cups
- aluminum foil
- pencils

Cup of Forgiveness

Give each child a paper cup and a marker. Have children write or draw a picture of something that they need to forgive someone (for example, teasing, breaking toys, saying mean things, etc.). They can write as many things as they can think of. When they are done writing, give each child a piece of foil paper big enough to cover his or her cup. If foil is not available, then supply thick white paper so that the writings or drawings will not be seen.

Children can keep their cups to remind them to be forgiving. Give each child an extra cup and foil paper and have them give it to someone. Have them tell that person that if someone does something hurtful to them, they can write it on the cup and then cover it with foil paper.

Encourage them to tell the person that God can help them be forgiving.

Debriefing

Why do you think we covered the cups? (So we won't see the hurtful things that people have done to us.) **When people hurt us, we want something bad to happen to them in return. When we forgive others, God takes away that desire to see something bad happen to them. We can even pray that God will change their hearts. Let's say our message together:**



GOD HELPS ME TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

Closing

Have the children bow their heads and say the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13 or Luke 11:2-4).

Sorry Song

Mary Gross, Lynnette Pennings

I'm gon-na get e - ven! You're gon-na be sor - ry! I'm so mad I want to kick, I'd

(Spoken)
like to hit you with a stick! I'd bet- ter ask for God's help, quick! Or

else I'm gon - na get e - ven! Let's be friends, OK?

2. Lord, I need Your help now,
I'm really feeling angry!
But I know that's not Your way,
I know what You're gonna say:
You'll help me love them anyway,
Instead of getting even.

3. I don't want to get even.
I am really sorry!
I can't forget what Jesus said;
I'm gonna show love instead.
I'm feeling bad, my face is red--
Let's be friends, OK?

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Finally Forgiven

References

Genesis 42-45:15;
Patriarchs and
Prophets,
pp. 224-231

Memory Verse

“Forgive, and you
will be forgiven”
(Luke 6:37).

The Message

God helps me to
forgive others.

Has anyone you love ever done something that has caused you pain, or hurt your feelings? Sari stole from her best friend Misha and then lied about it. She thought no one would ever know. But Sari was caught, and Misha, and her family, felt very hurt and betrayed. Years later Sari asked for forgiveness, and Misha forgave her. They became good friends again. Today’s story is similar.

Many people were cruel to Joseph. His brothers had sold him into slavery. Potiphar sent him to prison. But God blessed him. In fact, Pharaoh put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

Just as Joseph had predicted, according to what God told him, Egypt had plenty of food for seven years. Each year Joseph carefully stored the extra grain. He knew that a terrible famine was coming. When the dry years came, Joseph had plenty of grain to sell to the starving people.

One day 10 men arrived from a foreign land to buy food. They bowed before Joseph, and as they stood up, he recognized his 10 older brothers! He had not seen them since they had sold him into slavery many years before.

Joseph wanted to be sure they were different now. So he decided to test them. “You’re all spies,” he said. “You have come to see how strong we are!”

“Oh, no, sir, we are not,” his brothers replied. “We have come to buy food for our families. We are all the sons of one man. There were 12 of us. One is still at home, and one is dead.”



But Joseph wasn’t dead.

“Bring your other brother back to me, or I will know you are spies!” Joseph commanded. “Your brother Simeon will stay here in prison while you are gone.”

The worried brothers began their journey home. On the way one of them opened his sack and found money. “What is this?” he called to the others. “The money I paid for this grain is in my sack! What will the governor do now?”

When the brothers reached home and opened their sacks, all of them found money in them. They told their father what had happened. “We must take Benjamin back with us,” they pleaded. “It is the only way to prove that we are not spies. And we need to get Simeon back from Egypt.”

“No! Never!” their father responded. “Joseph is lost to me. Simeon is lost to me. I cannot lose another son!”

A few months later the brothers went to their father again. “Our children will starve!” they pleaded. “We have no more food. We must go back to Egypt!”

Their father didn’t want to let Benjamin go. But he knew they needed food, and they needed it soon. He finally agreed, and the brothers went back to Egypt.

When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin, he rushed to his private room to cry. But Joseph had one more test for his brothers. Were they still jealous? Would they be eager to get rid of Benjamin? “Fill their sacks,” he told his steward. “And put my silver cup in Benjamin’s sack.”

Soon the brothers were ready to go home. Joseph’s steward did as Joseph said, and the brothers started on their way.

A few miles from the palace Joseph’s steward stopped the caravan. He searched the men’s sacks and found Joseph’s cup. “Benjamin must return with me to the governor,” he declared.

The brothers were worried. *How can this be happening?* they wondered. *What will the governor do? We can’t leave Benjamin here!*

What will we tell our father?

"Your brother must stay here," Joseph declared. "He will become my slave."

Joseph's brother Judah begged that Benjamin be released. "I cannot go back to my father without Benjamin," he said. "Please, let me stay in his place."

Joseph could hide no more. He broke into tears and told his brothers who he really was. He told them about Potiphar's house and the years in prison. He described Pharaoh's dreams. And told how he had come to be the second most powerful man in Egypt.

God was with Joseph. God truly wants to be with us too. Just ask Him.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a walk with your family. Look for plants that are dry and dead. Why do plants die? Lack of rain causes famines. Ask an adult for an empty can or jar. Put it in the ground so the top of the can is level with the ground. Next time it rains, measure how much rain fell. Thank God for rain.
- Read your Bible story together. Then read Luke 6:37.

Sunday

- Read and discuss Genesis 42:1-20 during family worship. Draw a picture of Joseph's 10 brothers bowing before him in Egypt. Put it in your *Story of Joseph* book.
- Make construction paper shapes. Write one memory verse word on each. Tape each shape to a different length of yarn or string. Then tape the yarn or string to a coat hanger. Hang the mobile in your room and say your memory verse. Thank God for forgiveness.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Genesis 43:1-17, 26-34. Why was Joseph kind and forgiving to his brothers? Make a list of things you can do when others are unkind to you. Practice them today.
- Look at your mobile and say your memory verse. Do you need to forgive someone? Sometimes you may not *feel* like forgiving someone. If we pray and ask God to help us, He can give us the desire to forgive. When the Holy Spirit makes this change in our hearts and we say, "I forgive you," we will really mean it.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read and discuss

Genesis 44:1-13. Draw a picture of Joseph's steward finding Joseph's silver cup. Add it to your *Story of Joseph* book. Why was the cup in Benjamin's sack?

- If you did not make a "silver cup" in Sabbath School, write or draw on a paper cup something mean that someone has done to you, then cover the cup with aluminum foil. Ask God to help you forgive others. Make an extra cup for someone that you want to tell about forgiveness.

Wednesday

- With your family, read Genesis 44:14-34. Why was Joseph sure that his brothers had changed?
- Read Luke 23:33, 34. Who else forgave people who were very cruel to Him? Can you do that?
- Make up a tune for your memory verse and sing it. Ask God to help you to be forgiving.

Thursday

- For worship, read and discuss Genesis 45:1-15.
- On a piece of paper, write a hurt someone has done to you. Ask an adult to help you burn the paper, then blow the ashes away. How is this like God's forgiveness?
- Say your memory verse together. Why do you think that God wants you to know this verse?

Friday

- At worship time, use your *Story of Joseph* book to tell your lesson story. Then read Colossians 3:13 together. Ask each family member to think of something for which they need forgiveness. Then think of someone they will forgive. Say the memory verse together.
- Sing "The Family of God" before prayer (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139).