



## WEEK THREE – MARCH 2019 – SECOND/THIRD

**Bible Story:** *Step by Step (Jesus Teaches on Forgiveness) • Matthew 5:1-2; 23-24*

**Bottom Line:** *Take the first step to forgive others.*

**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 (NIRV)*

**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.*

**Summary:** Jesus brought His followers to a mountain to explain to them what it means to live as part of God’s kingdom. During that message, He said something important about forgiveness. In Matthew 5:23-24 Jesus said, “Suppose you are offering your gift at the altar. And you remember that your brother or sister has something against you. Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and make peace with them. Then come back and offer your gift.” We should seek to make things right with others before trying to worship God.

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## PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

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### 1. Early Arriver Idea

*Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** N/A

**What You Do:**

- Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and asking about their past week
- Invite kids to place their offerings in the *For Everyone* box on the wall near the main entrance
- Gather kids on one side of your Small Group area, and stand several feet away.
- Play “Small Group Leader, May I?” (based on the game “Mother, May I?”).
- Kids will take turns asking questions like, “Small Group Leader, may I take three big hops?” You will answer, “Yes, you may” or “No, you may not.” (NOTE: Kids should replace “Small Group Leader” with your actual name while playing the game.)
- If you choose to answer, “No,” add a qualifier like, “No, you may not. Only kids wearing red shirts may take three big hops.”
- Play until at least one child reaches you.
- Repeat as time and interest allow.

### 2. Balancing Act

*Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

**What You Need:** Pencils

**What You Do:**

- Gather the kids to stand and spread out as much as possible in your small group area.
- Give each child a pencil to balance on their head.
- Kids must walk around your small group area balancing the pencils on their heads.
- If a pencil falls, they must freeze and cannot move again until another friend picks up their pencil for them. (The friend who helps may hold his own pencil in place while helping.)
- Play as time and interest allow.

**What You Say:**

*“If you dropped the pencil in this game, what happened? (Pause for responses.) Yes! You couldn’t move until someone stepped up to help you. [Transition] In our Bible story today,*

*we'll learn about how stepping up can make a big difference in our relationships with others."*

*Lead your group to the Large Group area.*

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## LARGE GROUP

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### OVERVIEW:

**Bottom Line:** *Take the first step to forgive others. Forgiveness is important to God. If we are in a difficult situation with someone, we should seek to make it right with them. While there are some relationships that might never be fully restored, we can at least try to offer and show forgiveness to others in our life.*

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## SMALL GROUP

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### 1. Who, What, When, Why?

#### [Bible Story Review]

*Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play*

**What You Need:** Bible, "Who, What, When, Why?" Activity Pages, sticky notes, pencils

#### What You Do:

- Look up Matthew 5:23–24.
- Ask for a volunteer to read the verses aloud to the group.
- Pass out an Activity Page, four sticky notes, and a pencil to each kid.
- Discuss the verses and ask the questions below.
- As you answer them together, encourage the kids to write down their own answers on a sticky note and stick it on the Activity Page in the appropriate spot on the page.
- WHO: Who is this verse talking about? (Us)
- WHAT: What are these verses saying? (Forgive first and be quick to forgive)
- WHEN: When and where should we do this? (BEFORE anything else)
- WHY: Why is this an important truth to apply to our lives? (Because forgiveness fixes the relationship)

#### What You Say:

*"When you read your Bible, it's important to ask questions like these. Who is this written to? What is it saying? When or where should I do this? Why is it important? Today's verses remind us that forgiveness fixes things. Why is it hard sometimes to ask for forgiveness or to forgive someone else? Do you sometimes just want to stay mad? How does choosing to stay mad hurt your relationship with others? (Allow a few moments for kids to respond.)"*

*“Before we do anything else—even before we worship God—we should make things right. When we’ve hurt someone, the first thing we should do is to ask for forgiveness. When someone hurts us and wants forgiveness, we should give it! Jesus tells us that forgiveness comes first. Refusing to forgive or make things right not only hurts our relationship with others, it also hurts our relationship with God. He loves you and He’s forgiven you. Let’s **[Bottom Line] take the first step to forgive others.**”*

***[Make it Personal]*** (Tell your few about a time when you chose to forgive someone instead of holding onto your anger. If you could share an example from around the time you were the age of the kids in your group, that would be ideal. Either way, make sure your example is age-appropriate.)

## 2. Step by Step

### [Memory Verse Activity]

*Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing*

**What You Need:** “Step by Step” Activity Page, butcher paper, crayons, wall tape

### What You Do:

- Place the long piece of butcher paper on the floor and hang the memory verse up on the wall for everyone to see.
- Instruct the kids to trace the outline of one of their feet on the butcher paper. (The outlines will be far from perfect! But, as much as possible, let kids do the tracing themselves.) Make sure the feet are in a semblance of a line on the paper.
- Assign each kid a word or two from the verse posted above, making sure you’re assigning the verse according to the order of kids’ feet on the butcher paper.
- Instruct kids to write their word(s) inside their own foot outline, and then decorate the outline however they’d like.
- Once everyone is finished, practice saying the verse together a couple times. Or let kids take turns walking along the footsteps on the butcher paper, saying each word as they step on it.

### What You Say:

*“Our memory verse steps look so cool! Can anyone tell me why we wrote the verse on our feet outlines? Right! Because we’re talking about taking the first STEP toward forgiveness! And we need feet to take steps! **[Bottom Line] Take the first step to forgive others** when they do something wrong. Instead of staying mad, remember what our verse says: forgive!”*

***(NOTE: In this phase, most of the things kids need to forgive or be forgiven for are relatively minor and small. But if you have kids in your group who are in difficult home***

*situations or have been through abuse, be careful not to minimize what they've been through by implying that forgiveness is easy or simple.)*

### 3. Pray and Dismiss

#### [Prayer Activity]

*Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** Butcher paper from the “Step by Step” activity

#### What You Do:

- Gather the kids together along the memory verse butcher paper from the “Step by Step” activity.
- Ask kids to think of one thing they can do to take a step toward fixing a relationship when something has gone wrong.
- Let a couple volunteers share their ideas.

#### What You Say:

*“Let’s pray. God, thank You for loving us and for always choosing to forgive us, even when we don’t deserve it. When we’re tempted to stay mad or refuse to forgive, help us to make the wise choice and choose to fix the relationship instead of just being right or making a point. We want to be a good friend and to love others the way You love us. So this week, help us to **[Bottom Line] take the first step to forgive others.** In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”*

*As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show their adults your group’s memory verse butcher paper.*