



## WEEK FOUR – MARCH 2019 – SECOND/THIRD

**Bible Story:** *Please Forgive Me (The Story of the Lost Son) • Luke 15:11–24*

**Bottom Line:** *Everyone needs to be forgiven.*

**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:** In Luke 15:11–24, Jesus shares a parable to help people understand God’s amazing grace and forgiveness. A son came to his father and asked for his share of the inheritance. This broke the father’s heart, but he went ahead and gave the son what he wanted. The son wasted every last penny and hit rock bottom. He decided to go home to his father and ask forgiveness. The father was waiting with arms open wide and ready to have his son home.

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## PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITIES

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### 1. Early Arriver Idea

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

**What You Need:** “Party Invitations” (Activity Page), scissors, markers

**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
- Ask kids to imagine the greatest, coolest, best-ever party they can think of. The sky’s the limit!
- Give each child an invitation.
- Encourage them to think about:
  - FOR: What is the occasion? (birthday party, Christmas party, etc.)
  - DATE: When will the party be?
  - TIME: What time of day will the party be held?
  - PLACE: Where will the party be?
- As they’re working on their invitations, ask:
  - If you could plan a party anywhere, where would it be?
  - What games would you play at your party or what would people do for fun at your party?

### 2. Create a Story

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

**What You Need:** N/A

**What You Do:**

- Invite the kids to sit around a table or in a circle on the floor.
- Work together to tell a story:
  - Begin the story by saying a few sentences.
  - The child to your right will add a few more sentences.
  - When you say, “Stop,” the next child will continue the story.
  - Continue on around the circle.

**What You Say:**

*“What a story we created together. It was so fun to see how creative you were and how the story took so many turns! [Transition] Let’s head to Large Group to hear about a really important story Jesus told.”*

**Lead your group to the Large Group area.**

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## LARGE GROUP

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### OVERVIEW:

**Bottom Line:** *Everyone needs to be forgiven. Everyone at some point will do something to hurt another person, and we’ve all done something that goes against what God wants for us. We all need forgiveness. Thankfully, through Jesus, God offers forgiveness no matter what we’ve done.*

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## SMALL GROUP

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### 1. Story Board

#### [Bible Story Review]

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

**What You Need:** Construction paper, crayons, large piece of butcher paper, tape

#### What You Do:

- Pair up the kids.
- Give each pair a piece of construction paper.
- Assign each pair a part of the story to draw:
  - The father gave the son all of his inheritance.
  - The son left home and spent all his money.
  - The son ended up eating with pigs.
  - The son decided to go back home. The father saw his son coming home and ran toward him to give him a hug.
  - The son asked for forgiveness.
- Give kids time to draw their part. Remind them of what happened if needed.
- While kids are drawing, tape the butcher paper on the wall or create space to lay it on the floor.
- Once all of their drawings are finished, call on the group that drew part one.
  - Tell kids to explain their part of their story. You might need to prompt them by asking questions about details from the story and/or things you see in their drawing.
  - Give kids a piece of tape so they can put their drawing on the butcher paper.

- Continue with each pair, as they tape their pictures in order on the butcher paper.

### What You Say:

*“Great job working together and putting all of our story pieces together. The son in our story made some bad decisions, but he still came back to his father to ask for forgiveness. What did the father do when he came back? (He threw a party!) The story today reminds us that even when we make really big mistakes, **[Bottom Line] everyone needs to be forgiven.**”*

*“What are some things that kids your age might need to be forgiven for? (Encourage responses, such as: telling a lie, disobeying my parents, yelling at my brother for messing up a video game, using my sister’s stickers without asking, etc.) Those are the kind of things we all do sometimes, and they’re things we need to ask forgiveness for. Some of those things might also be done TO us, and we need to forgive the other person, even if we’re angry and even if they don’t ask for forgiveness. **[Bottom Line] Everyone needs to be forgiven.**”*

***[Make It Personal] (Tell about a child-appropriate time when you made the decision to forgive someone even when it was hard. Tell how that grew your relationship with God.)***

## 2. Giving Hearts

### [Application Activity]

*Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** Three paper heart cutouts

### What You Do:

- Gather your group to sit in a circle.
- Select three volunteers to stand outside the circle.
- Give each of those volunteers a heart.
- Explain to the group that these volunteers will be your “Givers.”
- Instruct the rest of the group sitting on the floor to hold up one hand and close their eyes.
- While their eyes closed, the Givers will quietly hand out their hearts to three kids of their choosing and return to stand next to you.
- Once all three volunteers return, have the kids open their eyes and let the three with hearts guess who they think gave them the heart.
- If the guesser is correct, they switch places with the Giver. If incorrect, they stay in the circle and that Giver may reveal himself and stay in that position for the next round.
- Play several rounds, allowing as many kids to be the Givers as possible.

### What You Say:

*“In this game, you had to guess the Giver. What’s the key word in the middle of the word ‘forgiveness’? Give! How is forgiveness like a gift? When you forgive someone, it’s like offering a gift the other person doesn’t deserve. Tell me: who needs forgiveness? Yes! **[Bottom Line] Everyone needs to be forgiven.** Who always forgives? God does! God sent His only Son, Jesus, so that everyone that believes in Him could be forgiven!”*

### 3. Pray and Dismiss

#### [Prayer Activity]

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

**What You Need:** Deflated balloon

#### What You Do:

- Gather the kids in a tight circle and ask them if there is anyone they need to forgive this week. (Instruct kids to think about this silently and keep their answers in their minds without saying names aloud.)
- Blow up the balloon with air and hold the end closed.
- Let the air out as you use the dialogue below to talk about why forgiveness is important.
- Close in prayer, asking God to help your group let it go and choose to forgive.

#### What You Say:

*“What might happen if I kept on blowing up this balloon? (Pause.) Yes, it will pop! This balloon is like us when we refuse to forgive and choose instead to stay mad. When we choose to let go of our anger, remembering that **[Bottom Line] everyone needs to be forgiven**, (let the air out of the balloon) then everyone wins! Let’s pray and ask God to help us choose forgiveness this week for everyone!*

*“God, thank You for sending Jesus so that we could be forgiven! We don’t want to stay angry and blow up and do something unkind. Help us to let it go and choose to forgive. Thank You for showing us how to do that. We love You. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”*

***As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share what they’ve learned that EVERYONE needs today.***

