



## GETTING READY

### 1. Welcome/Opener

#### What You Need:

- Host
- Hammer
- Measuring tape
- Six kid volunteers
- Several packages of dry noodles
- Several packages of marshmallows

#### *Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room
- Upbeat game music to use during the game

#### *Large Group Visuals:*

- Theme Slide
- “Tower of Noodles” Slide

## 2. Communicator Script

### What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible
- Same two racing volunteers from previous week
- Same two hard hats from previous week
- Previous Week's Props:
  - Two five-gallon buckets
  - Weighted vest (*optional*)
  - Sand
  - Four cones
- Mini marshmallows
- Extra-large marshmallows
- Table
- (*Optional*) Video recording of race from previous week

### *Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room.
- Upbeat game music to use during race

### *Large Group Visuals:*

- Key Question Slide
- (*Optional*) Video recording of race from previous week

### What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Communicator should come onto stage carrying a box with the extra-large marshmallows and a single mini marshmallow. Set the box on the table with the tallest tower (from the Welcome/Opener segment).
- Collect the props from the previous week's Introduction Activity (race) and have them ready for the communicator.

## 3. Worship

### What You Need:

- Through It All
- Let Go

# Everything Has Changed

**Bible Story:** Everything Has Changed (Zacchaeus) • *Luke 19:1-10*

**Key Question:** What does it feel like to be forgiven?

**Bottom Line:** When you forgive others, it can change them.

**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.

## Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**SFX:** Play high-energy music as kids enter.

**CG:** Theme Slide

### **Worship 1: Through It All**

*Host enters.*

#### Welcome

*Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host discusses recent/upcoming events: March Madness, World Team Table Tennis Championships Spring Break, Texas Independence Day, Daylight Savings Time, National Meatball Day, National Mario Day, National Johnny Appleseed Day, National Girl Scout Day, National Good Samaritan Day, National Potato Chip Day, movie openings like Onward, Mulan, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.*

## Opener

**HOST:** “What’s up, ladies and gents? It is so great to be here, in *[Name of Environment]*, with you today! I can’t help but look around at this building and think **WOW!** Just wow! I realize it’s not perfect. There are a few scuff marks on the floor. An odd smell passes through from time to time. And the parking lot might get a bit crowded. **BUT** this building is pretty fantastic. It has . . . *(searching)* windows . . . a roof . . . doors . . . and a solid floor! This didn’t happen by coincidence. Nope! Some ladies and dudes said we can’t let robots or beavers build this building for us. Rather they thought to themselves, you must **DO IT YOURSELF!**”

“As I hold a hammer in one hand and measuring tape in the other, I can’t help but admire that. Many of you are probably thinking, how in the world did they build a building as grandiose and spectacular as this without the help of robots or beavers. Everybody lean in. I want to tell you the secret to how they accomplished this feat. The secret will not only help you build a magnificent building like this, but it will also help you destroy the competition in a game we are about to play. *(Whispering)* The secret is . . . they built it one level at a time. Sounds obvious **BUT** it is a little bit harder to execute.”

“Which brings us to our game for this morning, which I like to call Tower of Noodles!”

**CG:** “*Tower of Noodles*” Slide

“I need some kids out there who want to exercise their engineering brain muscles to build the tallest tower possible. Who thinks they can do it? *(Pause for response.)*”

*Host brings six volunteers to the stage. Host splits the volunteers into three teams of two people. Each team should be given access to a random assortment of noodles and marshmallows.*

**HOST:** “The competition will last only 60 seconds. In that minute, your team will need to build the tallest tower. If you are able to pull off such an incredible feat, you will be given the title **TOWER OF NOODLES CHAMPION**. Please keep in mind, titles like this are not casually given out. They must be earned. Any questions? *(Pause for response.)* Great! As soon as you hear the music, start building!”

**SFX:** Upbeat game music

*Host allows approximately 60 seconds for the towers to be built. At the end of the activity, leave the towers on the stage for the Truth portion of the program. If the towers all collapse before the Truth portion, consider supporting the tower with more noodles during the worship set.*

HOST: “And that is time! Look at these towers! These are awesome . . . ish. Let’s give a round of applause for all of our architects! *(Pause for response.)* Who has the tallest tower? There is only one way to confirm this.”

*Host pulls out measuring tape to measure the height of the towers . . . even if it’s obvious.*

HOST: “The winner is . . .”

*Host makes a big to-do over the group with the tallest tower.*

HOST: “Congrats on being the TOWER OF NOODLES CHAMPION! Great job. I’m going to get off this stage to go work on getting approval for that addition. In the meantime, everybody get on your feet and let’s get ready to sing and worship our awesome God!”

*Host exits as Worship Leader enters the stage.*

## **Worship 2: Let Go**

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

## INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Hey, everyone! If you were here last week, you might remember that two people ran a race all around the room. Both ran hard and fast. Are our two racers here today? If so, let’s have our two racers from last week join me on the stage really quickly.”

*Communicator brings up both volunteers. If one or both is missing, bring up substitutes as needed. Communicator places the same colored hard hats on the two racers.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “For those who were not here to witness the race, it was not exactly fair. One racer was weighed down with items that slowed down their speed while the other ran burden-free.

**COMMUNICATOR:** “ It really affected the outcome of the race. *(To racer)* Do you think the extra weight slowed you down? *(Pause for response.)* What if we have a rematch? Does that sound ok? *(Pause for response.)* Let’s have the same rules. Both of you must run two laps around the room. First person to finish wins! However, let’s change it up this week!”

*Communicator takes the vest off the kid and places it on the other kid who didn’t wear it the previous week. Communicator also hands the other volunteer both five-gallon buckets.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “This is more fair! Let’s race! On your mark. Get set! GO!”

**CG: Upbeat Game Music**

*Everyone cheers both racers around the track. Once a kid completes two laps around the room, stop the race.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Wow! Great job to both our runners! Let’s give a huge round of applause to our runners as they go back to their seats.”

## TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Man! Once again, this race didn’t seem fair at all, right? One of the runners was slowed down by the weight and clunkiness of the sand buckets. We all know that if our volunteer here wasn’t carrying the buckets or wearing a weighted vest, the race would have been much, MUCH closer, right?”

“Nobody would sign up for a race wearing that vest or carrying buckets. When we race, we want to do our absolute best, and it would be pointless to attempt any race with buckets full of sand in hand.”

“Last week, we talked about how the weighted vest and five-gallon buckets are similar to the weight we carry when we do not forgive others! It can have negative effects on all aspects of our lives. But what if the forgiveness we choose to give doesn’t just lift the weight off your own shoulders like we lifted off *[Name of racer who wore vest previous week]* but actually impacts the person you’re forgiving, too?”

“In other words, what if forgiving others for the wrongs they’ve done to you also lifts a weight off their shoulders and changes them as well?”

“Big question, huh? Sounds like we need to head back to the Bible and discover something that might help us with this question. Let’s head to a moment from Jesus’ life when forgiveness led to some major changes for someone.”

## TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** “When this event took place, the Roman government was in charge. Because their empire was so massive, it was very expensive to run. Roads needed to be built. Government buildings needed to be constructed. Soldiers needed to be paid. To finance this massive operation, the Roman government taxed everyone within their nation. In other words, government officials collected a percentage of everyone’s income. To do this, tax collectors were hired to collect taxes from each town.”

“In Israel, where our story takes place, tax collectors were among the most unpopular people around. Tax collectors forced Jewish communities to pay taxes to a government that did not believe in the one true God. Rather, it supported and believed in false gods. Within Israel, there was a town called Jericho, and a man named Zacchaeus lived there. Zacchaeus is a long name, let’s call him Zach for short. Zach was the Chief Tax Collector, but more than that he was also Jewish. Most people viewed Zach as a traitor. Not only was he working for this government who had taken over, but he took extra tax money and kept it for himself.”

“Think about this for a moment. His career was marked by cheating people out of their hard-earned money. While everybody’s stack of coins was getting smaller, Zach’s stash of money was getting larger—much larger. As the Chief Tax Collector, Zach would have cheated strangers, friends, and even family out of money. Nobody would have trusted him or appreciated his presence around town. It would have been a lonely life to be one of the most hated men in Jericho.”

“During this time, Jesus was growing in His popularity. Prior to this story, Jesus healed a man who couldn’t see, healed ten men with a terrible skin disease, and fed 5,000 men with a single dinner. In addition, Jesus spoke with authority. He told important messages through parables or stories on difficult subjects like money, worry, or loving others. Large crowds gathered when Jesus was present to see what He would do or hear what He would say.”

“One day, Jesus traveled to Jericho. By the time He arrived, a large crowd had already formed.”

*Communicator moves the winning marshmallow tower to the center of the stage. Communicator pulls out a single, mini marshmallow.*

COMMUNICATOR: “Something really important to note is the fact that Zach was short. Let’s pretend for a moment this mini marshmallow is Zacchaeus. I realize it is hard to see especially for those in the back of the room, but this was Zacchaeus’ reality every single day.”

*Communicator pulls out lots of really large marshmallows.*

COMMUNICATOR: “This larger marshmallow represents the other people. When the Bible talks about a large crowd, this is what I want you to picture. Lots and lots of really massive marshmallows.”

*Communicator lays out lots of really large marshmallows gathered in a crowd next to the marshmallow and noodle tower.*

COMMUNICATOR: “After the crowd formed, something really interesting happened. Check out what Luke says in chapter 19 of his book. *(Read directly from Luke 19:3) ‘Zacchaeus wanted to see who Jesus was. But he was a short man. He could not see Jesus because of the crowd,’ (NIRV).* Not only did most of the town want to run out to greet Jesus, but Zach also wanted to join the crowd. But Zach couldn’t see a thing.”



*Communicator holds up the mini marshmallow and places it behind the “crowd” of large marshmallows.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “The problem was obvious. The crowd was taller than Zach. From the back, Zach couldn’t see a thing, just like you can’t see our mini Zach marshmallow sitting right behind the other marshmallows. This was indeed a problem. However, Zach came up with a plan to simply see Jesus. Check this out. *(Read directly from Luke 19:4) ‘So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree. He wanted to see Jesus, who was coming that way,’ (NirV).* He didn’t have any intentions of speaking to Jesus. He simply wanted to get his eyes on Him. He was so desperate to see Jesus he climbed up a tree to get a better view.”

*Communicator takes mini marshmallow and places it on top of the tall tower.*

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Now Zacchaeus could see SO much better. Zach was able peer over the tops of the mega marshmallow heads to the Guy everyone gathered to see. As he watched, Zach noticed Jesus walking toward the tree he climbed. To his amazement and certainly to the amazement of everyone else, Jesus walked up to the tree, looked up at Zach, and said, *(Read directly from Luke 19:5b) ‘Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today,’ (NirV).*

“Imagine what Zacchaeus must have been thinking. He never climbed the tree to be seen . . . much less to have a conversation with Jesus. On top of that, Jesus knew Zacchaeus’ name! Without hesitation, Zach hopped out of the tree and welcomed Jesus into his home.”

“Everyone around noticed. Check it out, *(Read directly from Luke 19:7) ‘All the people saw this. They began to whisper among themselves. They said, “Jesus has gone to be the guest of a sinner,” (NirV).* They did not approve of Zach, and they wondered why in the world would Jesus stay and hang out with the tax collector. This is further evidence of just how much the people did not like Zach.”

“But this is the moment everything changed for Zach. After this encounter with Jesus, we discover that Zacchaeus changed. He stood up to make a proclamation. Zacchaeus said he would give half of his possessions to the poor. Keep in mind, Zach was a wealthy man. Half of his possessions would have been a substantial amount. He continued and said he would pay back everyone he cheated four times the amount.”

“Jesus had an incredible response. He said, *(Read directly from Luke 19:9-10) ‘Today salvation has come to your house. You are a member of Abraham’s family line. The Son of Man came to look for the lost and save them,’ (NirV).*

## **APPLICATION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Marshmallows aside, this is an incredible true story. This story demonstrates the way forgiveness can repair relationships and lift the burden. Yes, Zacchaeus was a bad man who was trusted by

nobody. But it's important to note that Jesus already knew every wrong thing Zacchaeus had done. And yet, He still chose to stop at THAT tree. Jesus could have easily approached any other individual in the crowd, and there is a solid chance Jesus would have found a more respectable, decent and honest person than Zach. Jesus knew exactly what He was doing. He chose to forgive all the wrong Zacchaeus had done, and as a result, Zach was radically changed from the inside out."

"Since the very beginning of time, God has always made a way for forgiveness. God had a plan to fix our relationship with Him. The greatest act of forgiveness was when He sent Jesus. As Jesus lived His life on earth, He showed forgiveness by the way He treated people, just like He did with Zach."

"Our job is to reflect God with our words and actions. It means we forgive others just like God has forgiven us. It may or may not mean you are good friends with that person . . . but you never know. This means you can choose to forgive when your baby sister ruins your completed homework. It means forgiving the kid who steps on your brand-new white kicks. Yes, it even means forgiving your best friend for forgetting your birthday. And when you do that, you never know—God could also completely change them, too. When we forgive others, it can be powerful in their lives!"

## LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "That's why we should try and do for others. I have a feeling we might also offer forgiveness because this is exactly how we want to be treated. As you head to Small Groups, think about this"

### **CG: Key Question Slide**

COMMUNICATOR: "What does it feel like to be forgiven? How great does it feel when a parent or brother or sister or friend says, 'I forgive you,' and really means it? Think about it. When we better understand this question, we will better understand the significance of forgiving others. You'll have time to talk more about all of this in Small Group. Before you head out, let's pray and ask God to help us show forgiveness to others. Let's pray."

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

### **SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit**