



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- One duct tape roll for each Small Group
- Large pieces of cardboard per Small Group
- Two non-biased Cardboard Clubhouse judges

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 (downloadable from the website):

- Theme Slide
- “Cardboard Clubhouse” Slide

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.
- Each group will need several large pieces of cardboard to build their Cardboard House. There should be enough cardboard for each house to have a roof, floor, and three walls. At the beginning of the month,

contact your nearest large retail store such as Walmart, Lowes, or Home Depot to save their cardboard boxes.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible
- Whiteboard
- Marker
- Cardboard houses from Opener

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

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

Large Group Visuals (downloadable from the website):

- Key Question Slide

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.
- After the game, all the cardboard houses will need to be placed in one of three areas. The best house should be kept on stage to represent the house prodigal son lives. The other houses should be placed in the back two corners of the room. One will represent the location the prodigal son initially moved where the wild living took place. The last location will represent the pig farm. Communicator will travel between the three locations while telling the story.
- **NOTE:** If you are not doing the opening cardboard home game, you will need to create several cardboard homes as a props for the Communicator to use during the script.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Only Way
- Wide Open

Please Forgive Me

Bible Story: Please Forgive Me (Lost Son) • *Luke 15:11-24*

Key Question: When has someone forgiven you?

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 can trust God no matter what.

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: Only Way

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, National Chips and Dip Day, National Puppy Day, National Chocolate Covered Raisin Day, Manatee Appreciation 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, everybody? Welcome to [Name of Environment]! For those of you who are new to this place, I want to take a moment to say that you picked the right day to come because today we are learning how to build HOUSES! Yes! And I do mean homes, casas, dwellings, shelters! Whatever you want to call it. We will be working through design, foundation, framing, and roofing . . . all in about . . . *(thinking)* three minutes.”

“This is not a job for some big time contractor from the big city. Nope! I am of the opinion that you can DO IT YOURSELF! I realize you’re looking around and wondering where’s the lumber, concrete trucks and shingles. But let’s all be honest for just a moment. All that stuff is overrated and SO unnecessary for a solid, livable structure. What you really need is a little bit of this . . .”

Host pulls out a piece of duct tape and cardboard with flourish and an exaggerated smile of excitement.

“YES! With a generous roll of duct tape and a few pieces of cardboard one can construct a solid . . . and yes I do mean solid . . . place for you to call home. Would anybody out there like to build a new home? *(Pause for response.)* That’s exactly what I thought!”

“Because literally everybody in this room is practically begging me to build a house, why don’t we ALL build houses in a game we like to call . . . CARDBOARD CLUBHOUSE!”

CG: Cardboard Clubhouse Slide

“To do this, we need everybody to gather with your small group.”

Host makes sure each small group has a roll of duct tape and enough cardboard to construct a house large enough for someone to sit inside. Consider giving each group a pair of scissors (to be used very carefully).

“Next to each small group, you will find all the necessary tools to build an architectural cardboard masterpiece! Each home needs to be large enough for one person to sit inside. These homes need at least three sides, a floor, a roof, and one window. Make sense? Any questions? *(Pause for response.)* Great! You’ve got two minutes to build a CARDBOARD CLUBHOUSE! Ready? GO!”

SFX: Upbeat Game Music

Host allows enough time for groups to quickly build homes out of cardboard. Groups should not overthink the home building. If desired, have a couple of non-biased judges select a best cardboard clubhouse while the building is happening.

“Wow! I’m not sure what I was expecting when I was dreaming of these cardboard homes, but this is definitely more than what I was expecting! These . . . are . . . something . . . else! While each of you was working tirelessly for two minutes building these architectural wonders, we had a couple of building experts identifying the best CARDBOARD CLUBHOUSE in the room. Would you all like to know which house was selected? *(Pause for response.)* Without any further stalling, the CARDBOARD CLUBHOUSE CHAMPION SMALL GROUP goes to *[Name of Small Group]*! Phenomenal job! Give it up for the winning small group while they carefully relocate their structure to the stage!”

Host stalls while the winning SG brings their house to the stage. Place their house center stage to be used later during the Truth section. All additional cardboard homes should be placed in the back two corners of the room to be used later during the Truth section.

“I am so impressed! You were able to DO IT YOURSELF! Great job to everyone. While I head backstage, get ready to worship our amazing God!

Host exits the stage while worship leader enters.

Worship 2: Wide Open

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey, everyone! I hope all of you are doing great. You may have noticed that I have behind me a blank white board that we need to fill up with words. Pretty sure it will take a big chunk of the room to do this. Here’s how it’s going to work. I’ll need everyone to think about the ways people get in trouble? Yes, as in when they make poor decisions. This could be at school, at home, in the neighborhood—you know, that sort of thing. If

you have an idea, raise your hand, and I'll write it down if it isn't already on the board. Make sense? *(Pause for response.)* Who has an idea?"

Communicator allows time to fill up half of the white board.

Communicator does not write in complete sentences for time's sake. Instead Communicator writes a few words to represent to full idea.

"Wow. Yep, not to hard to think of things people do that are wrong. But how about a different question: What do people typically do when they realize they've messed up? Think on that and if you have an idea, I'll write it down on the board. Leaders, you can help, too! Any ideas out there?"

Communicator allows time to fill in the other half of the white board.

Note: this might be more difficult for kids to imagine. Ideas could be: cover it up, lie about it, deny it, confess it, apologize, etc.

"Thanks! These are exactly what I was looking for. These are many of the things people do to get in trouble and some of how they respond when they get caught."

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "Let's say that everything on the white board represents all of the bad things *other* people do. Not what *you* do, right? But let's take an honest look at ourselves. What things do you do that get you in trouble? Now, don't answer it out loud. Instead, just think about it. Maybe it's refusing to listen to your mom when she needs your help. It could be talking too much to your desk-mate in school. When your little brother starts to bother you, maybe you are quick to retaliate."

"What is your reaction when you're caught? Do you hide your face behind a pillow? Do you give the person talking to you the 'stank eye'? Do you start to cry because you do not like getting in trouble?"

"Every single one of us will make poor decisions from time to time. When we get caught, we may react in different ways, but how should we react? That's a great question. What's great is that when we have big questions like that, we have a place we can look: the Bible! In the New Testament, we discover more about Jesus and what He has to say about . . . well . . . everything—including forgiveness."

TRUTH

The winning cardboard house should be placed on stage to represent the Prodigal Son's home. The other cardboard homes should be split between the back two corners to represent luxury high rise and the pig farm.

COMMUNICATOR: "Maybe you've heard about how Jesus could pack a crowd. From all walks of life, people came to be healed, to hear His teachings, and to watch His miracles. This was true of moms, kids, carpenters, tax collectors, misfits, and all sorts of people who had done wrong things. It was even true of Jewish religious leaders."

"Many of these religious leaders did not approve of the people Jesus chose to hang out with. It was their belief that if they stayed away from certain types of people, it made them closer to God. But the way Jesus lived demonstrated God's love for every single person He came in contact with. Unfortunately, the religious leaders didn't see it that way. Jesus knew the hearts of the religious leaders, and He told them a parable, a story that helped others understand something about what it meant to follow God."

Communicator moves to the cardboard house on the stage.

"Jesus begins the story with a father who lives on a farm with his two sons. I like to picture the farm with rolling hills filled with green grass for the herds of sheep and goats. A few big shade trees scattered throughout the property including ones surrounding a beautiful pond stocked with fish. At the center of this estate, I can see this . . ."

Communicator presents the cardboard home on the stage.

" . . . a picturesque farm house. This is where the farmer grew his farm into a sustainable operation and the place he raised his two boys."

"However, this perfect scene all changed when the younger son made an improper demand. As Jesus told the story, the crowd leaned in to hear what the young son said. *(Read directly from Luke 15:12b) 'Father, give me my share of the family property,' (NIRV)*. In other words, the younger son was wanting his inheritance early instead of waiting until his father died to receive his share of the estate. This would have been rude and painfully

disrespectful. However, the father obliged, and the son packed up all he had and traveled over there (*pointing to one of the corners filled with cardboard houses*) . . .”

Communicator walks to the back of the room to stage by one of the cardboard houses.

“. . . to a faraway country. I like to think the younger son found a posh high-rise to call his home . . . something just like this (*pointing*). I imagine this place would have had 12-foot ceilings, a professional series oven, a huge walk-in closet, and a rainforest shower head in a gigantic shower. In that town, he did it up big. I’m talking Yeezy kicks, unlimited chocolate fountains, pool parties, and Takis for days! OK, those sorts of things didn’t really exist back then, but I think you get the point. The younger son spared no expense living a crazy life doing whatever he pleased. Eventually, he spent everything he had. At the same time, the country where he was living experienced a famine. Food was scarce and forced the younger son to find work . . . over there (*pointing to the other corner in the room with cardboard houses*)”

Communicator walks to the other corner containing cardboard houses.

“. . . at a pig farm. And let’s be honest. Being out in the fields with the pigs would have been a muddy, mucky mess. And who knows where he lived during that time since he’d spent everything he had. Maybe he was living in a place similar to these cardboard houses. One of his responsibilities while taking care of the pigs was to feed them their slop. As he did, the younger son found himself longing to eat the pigs’ food. In fact, he asked for some, but no one gave him any. It was a far, far cry from his father’s farm (*pointing*).”

“As he spent time thinking, he was reminded of how his father’s servants lived. There was more than enough food, and he had a wonderful place to live. The younger son made the difficult decision to do something crazy. Check out what the younger son said to himself, (*Read directly from Luke 15:18-19*) ‘I will get up and go back to my father. I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven. And I have sinned against you. I am no longer fit to be called you son. Make me like one of your hired servants,”’ (*NirV*). So without giving the pigs a second thought, the younger son returned that way (*pointing to the cardboard house on the stage*) . . .”

Communicator walks back to the stage.

“. . . back home. The last time he saw his dad, the younger son disrespected him and left home. As Jesus was telling this story, I can picture the crowd wondering how the father would respond to his return. Would he be shunned from the family? Would he be ignored? Or would the father do something totally different?”

“Luckily for the son, the father’s response was completely unexpected. While the son was still a distance from the farm, his father spotted him approaching. Jesus said the father *(Read directly from Luke 15:20b)* ‘was filled with tender love for his son. He ran to him. He threw his arms around him and kissed him,’ (NirV). It was a beautiful welcome that was completely undeserved. Then the father instructed the servants to bring out the best robe, sandals, and jewelry to put on the younger son. It was time to celebrate. At the direction of the father, the servants cooked up a huge meal and threw a huge party because the younger son was back . . . safe and sound.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “This was the story Jesus told to make a point to the crowd around Him, also known as a parable. In it the father freely gave to his son. After the son spent his inheritance and lived with pigs, he returned home to find unconditional love and forgiveness from the father. This forgiveness and love was not deserved or even expected by the son. The picture Jesus was painting was that of God’s love for us.”

“In this story, God is like the loving father while all of us are like the wayward, younger son. We may not be craving pig slop or spending all our inheritance, but we all mess up and make mistakes. However, God still chooses to forgive us regardless of our sin. When we turn back to God, we always find His love and forgiveness even though we don’t deserve it.”

“From the very beginning, this was God’s plan. Sin separated us from Him, but God didn’t want us to stay separated. So God had a rescue plan to pay the debt caused by sin. He sent Jesus, His only Son, to earth to pay the debt and be our Savior. It’s through Jesus that God offers us forgiveness . . . all of us!”

Communicator moves to white board and points out several of the reasons other people get in trouble.

“As I read through the list of things people do to get in trouble, I know when they are done to us . . . it hurts us deeply. But the reason we are able to forgive others is because God forgives us. We are able to look to God to be our example and strength to offer forgiveness to others.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “Forgiving others can be incredibly difficult. When it is especially hard, don’t forget to lean on God. Remember how much God has forgiven you. Remember the times when you’ve messed up and needed forgiveness from people in your life. As you head to small group, think about this:”

CG: Key Question Slide

“When has someone forgiven you? Think about how it feels when some decides to let go of a mistake you’ve made. It’s pretty awesome, right? We get to offer that sort of forgiveness to others. But like we said, this can be hard sometimes. Let’s pray right now and ask God to help us make the wise choice and forgive others just like God has forgiven us. 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.