

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding



### 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: *Optional: ball*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Direct the kids to join you in a circle.
- Invite the kids to think about three wishes they'd make right now if they knew their wishes would come true.
- Instruct the kids to go around in the circle (or toss a ball around the circle) and allow every kid an opportunity to share one wish at a time. (Make sure you share, too!)
- Continue around the circle as time and interest allow!

WHAT YOU SAY:

"That was so much fun! There are so many things that we're wishing and hoping for. Some of them are really big—like asking for a million dollars! And some of them are more realistic—like wanting to win our soccer game. **[Transition] Today, we'll hear a story about a father and a son who each hoped for different things. Follow me!**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Homecoming**

The Story of the Lost Son  
Luke 15:11-32

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God will always forgive you.

### MONTHLY 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, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

Forgiveness—deciding that  
someone who has wronged you  
doesn't have to pay

### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

**MADE TO MOVE**

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



**2. PAPER BATTLE**

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Paper, pencils or pens, masking tape, and timer or smartphone with a three-minute song

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Give each kid a few pieces of paper and a pencil or marker.
- Instruct the kids to write something (true or imaginary) on their paper that someone may need forgiveness for:
  - not telling the truth
  - doing something a grown-up asked you not to do
  - saying something mean to your brother or sister
  - taking someone’s pencil at school
- Encourage the kids to write as many ideas on different pieces of paper as time and interest allow.
- Divide your group into two teams.
- Tape a line down the middle of the floor.
- Set the timer for three minutes or put on a favorite three-minute song.
- Direct the kids to take their papers, ball them up, and throw them to the other side of the room on the count of three.
  - Instruct kids to continue throwing any paper ball that comes to their team’s side of the room back across the line.
- Instruct the kids to try to have all of the balls of paper on the other side of the room by the time the timer goes off or the song is over!

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

“How did it feel to write down the things a person might need forgiveness for? (*Invite responses.*) I bet sometimes it could make us feel sad, or even a little uncomfortable when we remember the times we did something wrong. How did it feel to ball them up and throw them away from you? (*Invite responses.*)

“That’s one of the best things about God. You can trust that when you feel sorry for a choice you made, **God will always forgive you.** God doesn’t hold these things against us. God completely, fully forgives us, giving us the chance to make wiser choices the next time.”

**TODAY’S BIBLE STORY**

**Homecoming**

The Story of the Lost Son  
Luke 15:11-32

**TODAY’S BOTTOM LINE**

**God will always forgive you.**

**MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE**

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**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

**Forgiveness—deciding that  
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**BASIC TRUTH**

**I can trust God no matter what.**

**MADE TO PLAY**

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



**3. BETTER WITH LETTERS**

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles and posterboard with markers or dry erase board and dry erase markers

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Look up Colossians 3:13 together with the navigation tips below.

***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:** Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When kids find the table of contents, lead them to find "Colossians" in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find "Colossians," lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find "Colossians." Help the kids find the page. When they find "Colossians," explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 13 in chapter 3.*

- Read the memory verse aloud for the kids.
- Ask if any kids can remember the entire verse without looking at it in the Bible.
- Test the kids' knowledge by writing the first letter of each word on a poster board or whiteboard.
- Go around the circle, asking kids to repeat their memory verse one word at a time, just by looking at the first letter of each word.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"When it comes to forgiveness, we probably won't always feel like forgiving in the moment. But we can push back how we WANT to respond and choose to love and forgive. Plus God will help you forgive if you just ask. You can choose to offer forgiveness to others because when you ask God for forgiveness, **God will always forgive you.**"

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**

**Homecoming**

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Luke 15:11-32

**TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE**

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**MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE**

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**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

Forgiveness—deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay

**BASIC TRUTH**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO REFLECT**

an activity that creates space for personal processing and application



**4. PRAY AND DISMISS**  
[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed.

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Lead kids in saying today's Bottom Line together several times. **God will always forgive you.**
- Invite the kids to close their eyes, put a hand on their heart, and say, "God will always forgive ME."
- Explain that you will begin a prayer and direct the kids to say this variation of today's Bottom Line together—**God will always forgive me**—every time you pause.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"God, we all make mistakes. Not one of us is perfect. But *(Pause for kids to say, "God will always forgive me.")*. We know that there's nothing we could do that would make You love us less, and there's nothing we could do that would make You love us more. You love us totally and completely, right now, just as we are. And when we ask for forgiveness *(Pause for kids to say, "God will always forgive me.")*. God, when we do something wrong, remind us that we can come to You, because *(Pause for kids to say, "God will always forgive me.")*. Remind us that You will always be ready to welcome us with open arms, just like the father from today's story. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, invite kids to say the Bottom Line. **God will always forgive you.**

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