

What is Forgiveness?

Teacher Pep Talk: Teaching people about the Forgiveness offered by God through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the most important and life changing thing you can ever teach anybody. You are truly way out in the middle of the mission field here. You are sowing seeds that will lead to the salvation of others! Good for you!!! Don't be afraid!!

Pray before you go in to teach this lesson. Ask God to make your presentation soft and meek, to help you be open and transparent and vulnerable. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you as you present this most wonderful of all messages... **the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Before you head in to teach this lesson, please review the following scripture verses: John 3:16, Hebrews 9:22, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1 and Acts 10:43.

You will need: A clear jar with a lid, strips of dark colored paper, a cross made out of white paper, all of which will fit into the jar.

Major Points:

- God loves us.
- Each of us sins.
- We can't clean up our own sins.
- God can and will forgive our sins because of Jesus.

Memory Verse: Acts 10:43...everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Lesson:

God loves us.

- We've been talking about how God loves us.
- We have learned that God loves us all the time. He loves us when we are happy or sad. He loves us when we are good or bad. He loves us forever and ever.
- God loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to us to provide forgiveness for all of our sins.

Each of us sins.

- That is a strange word, "sin". We need to talk about what it means.
- The word "sin" literally means "to miss the mark". If you had a bow and arrow and were shooting for a bull's-eye, and you missed, that would be picture of what the word "sin" means.

- We don't always do what is right. Sometimes we choose to do wrong things. That is sin.
- When we know what is right, but we choose to do what is wrong, that is sin.
- And sin is a real problem for us. Let me show you.

Object Lesson: **We can't clean up our own sins.**

- **[Take clear jar with lid and show the children.]** See this jar? It is pretty and clean, there is nothing in it. This jar is like us before sin.
- **[Take dark strips of paper, open lid, and put them in.]** See this dark colored paper? This represents sin. Whenever we know what is right, but we choose to do what is wrong, we sin. It is like if we take the dark paper and put it in the clear jar.
- **[Close lid with strips of paper inside.]** Uh-Oh. Now the sins are on the inside and they can't come out. **[Shake jar upside down.]** They don't come out no matter what. *(If the children suggest taking off the lid, tell them "No, that's the real problem with sin. Once it's on the inside of us, there's no way we can clean ourselves up! Only God can do that!")*
- This is very sad. It would be VERY sad if we had to live this way forever. There is no way for us to clean ourselves up. There is no way for us to take out the sins.

God can and will forgive our sins because of Jesus.

- **[Be excited!!!]** But!!!! There is GOOD NEWS!! God can clean us up!! God can clean us up because of JESUS!!!
- **[Show paper cross.]** Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and died for our sins on the cross. And because of what Jesus has done, we can be forgiven of all of our sins!!
- **[Open jar lid, take out dark paper, and put in paper cross. Close jar lid again.]** Because of Jesus and what He did for us, God can and will forgive our sins. When Jesus comes in, the sins go out! And then our lives are new and different, because Jesus comes to live inside of us.
- **[Throw dark strips of paper at the outside of the jar.]** Even if we sin again (and we will) the sins don't get stuck inside. Once Jesus lives inside of us, the sins can't get back inside again. Only Jesus lives there!
- **[Show children the jar with the cross inside.]** God has forgiven our sin because of what Jesus has done. And He will never count those sins as ours again. When God looks at us now, He only sees Jesus in us!! Isn't that wonderful?!

Let's pray and thank God for sending Jesus and for forgiveness of our sins.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for loving us.
Thank you for sending Your Son, Jesus.
Thank you for forgiveness of sin through Him.
Amen.

Suggested Activities:

NOTE: This is a long lesson today. As a result you may have less time to do activities afterwards.

Repeat the Object Lesson Children find this object lesson fascinating. They may wish to have you repeat it, or they may want to try putting the strips of paper in by themselves, or taking them out, etc. Encourage them to do so with your supervision. As they do the parts of opening and closing the lid and putting in the various papers, tell them the parts of the lesson again.

Missing the Mark This is a simple game of eye-to-hand coordination. You will need a bucket and at least one small ball. Place the empty bucket at the end of the room. Have the children line up behind an imaginary line on the floor. From the line have the children try 3 times to throw a ball into the bucket. Repeat until everyone has had a turn. Explain that the word sin originally meant “missing the mark.” When we choose to do what is wrong instead of what is right, it is called “sin”. This is because we are “missing the mark” of what God wanted for us originally. **NOTE:** *To change up this game, have more than one target, or more than one type of object to throw. You can change the distance needed to throw, keep score, blindfold the thrower, etc. Masking tape makes a great line on the floor or rug. You can use sheets of newspaper wadded up for “balls”. Plastic buckets work great, or you can use wastepaper cans, etc.*

Wiggle Waters *I used to think my first grade teacher made up this game... but then as I got older I figured “No... probably not.” Anyway... it’s a great game for Little Guys!* Choose one person to be the “Judge”. The Judge comes to the front of the room and says “1, 2, 3, Wiggle Waters!” Everyone else in the room begins wiggling all over while standing in place. Then the Judge says “1, 2, 3, Still Waters!!” and everyone “freezes” and stands perfectly still. The Judge then chooses someone who seems to be the stillest to be the next “judge”. Repeat... and repeat... and repeat.... *(Great game!)*

NOTE: <i>I love to use a variation of this game. Use a CD player and a fun Christian music CD. The Judge turns the music on and then off again. (No need to say the Wiggle Waters line.) While the music is playing, the children dance in place. When the music is off they “freeze.” The Judge chooses the stillest person to become the next judge. Repeat until all of the children have had a chance to play the Judge.</i>
