

SLAM

TUNED IN - FORGIVENESS

Topic: Forgiveness

Today's Objective: You must make allowances for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you.

Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:13)

Lesson Outline:

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Welcome & Introduction	5 minutes	Page 1
Worship	10 minutes	Page 1
Discussion	10 minutes	Page 2
Activity	20 minutes	Page 1
Prayer	10 minutes	Page 3
Games	10 minutes	Page 1

Welcome:

Welcome all the kids and ask them to share with you about the best part of the year so far ☺

The Facilitator will let you know when it is time for Kids Worship. Please come downstairs and join with the other children for Worship. Please encourage the children to join in and help the younger children to engage. We would also ask that you participate as the children will watch you also. Feel free to speak to the kids worship team or the Facilitator if you have any questions.

Game:

Before this game, you'll need to crumple several pieces of papers into balls. Divide kids into groups of 8-10, or divide the class into two even teams. Have players in each group stand in a circle about an arms length apart. Players must stay in the circle, but then move around within a three-foot radius of where they're standing to hit the balls.

Give each group three or four paper balls, and instruct groups to try and keep the papers in motion by continuously tossing them from one person to another. It helps to start one ball and get a rhythm going and then add in the other balls. The first team to successfully get all of their balls moving in a rhythm wins. If need be, subtract the amount of paper balls to allow teams the ability to be successful.

Discussion & Activity:

At the moment we are looking at a series called Tuned in. Previously the group has discussed honesty, respect and responsibility. This week the discussion will focus on Forgiveness The discussion and object lesson to start the lesson can be found on pages 2 onwards.

Please note that this series of lessons is from Phoenix Vineyard. We have done our best to make them culturally relatable for the kids. Please feel free though to use your own examples if you feel you have better ones. You can also take the ideas in the lesson and present it in your own way. It does not have to be read word for word.

Object Lesson

Vitamin Bottle

How many of you take your vitamins everyday? I remember when I was a kid I use to take the Flinstone chewable vitamins. Do they still have those around? I remember they were hard and when you chewed them up they got stuck in your teeth. Now they have those gummi bear vitamins. I sure wish they had those when I was a kid. You know, as adults, we still have to take vitamins. So just know that you never grow out of needing vitamins. They just aren't as tasty as when you're a kid.

Vitamins are important to us. You see our bodies need nutrients to do all the work that it has to do. Part of the body's job is to keep us healthy. Unfortunately, most of our diets don't give us all the vitamins that we need, so we have to take vitamin pills to make up for what we lack in our diets. I know taking vitamins can seem like a drag at times, especially if you don't have the kind that taste good, but without them, we'd be worse off. You see, while taking vitamins might be a chore for some of us, they free us up from many different sicknesses. When you're body has what it needs to be healthy, it's able to keep common germs from making you sick. However, when we don't have the right vitamins in our diets, we can actually get sick more often and more easily. That reminds me of topic of discussion, today. We're talking about forgiveness. Forgiveness frees us from some serious stuff that can make us spiritually sick. With it, we can be healthy, but without it, we can easily get affected by negative things in life.

Discussion & Activity:

This is our last week of *Tune In ... to the Character God Wants*. We have been discussing aspects of our character that God wants us to have. We've looked at what those things mean and how they benefit us. I want to quickly recap the previous three we have talked about. We first talked about honesty and how it protects us in life. Then we talked about respect and how to respect others, along with earning respect for ourselves. Last week we discussed responsibility and how each of us has certain things that we are responsible for no matter what. Today we are talking about forgiveness.

The definition for forgiveness is a little more developed than our other definitions that we've given you. This one has three parts to it. So what is forgiveness? First of all, it's our ability to **Release** or **Clear Sins**. Essentially, this is what Jesus did for the entire world when He died on the cross. He released us from the penalty of our sins. The Bible is clear in the fact that we have all sinned, and the

consequences for that sin is eternal separation from God in a place no one likes to talk about. However, God forgave our sins through what Jesus did on the cross. When we ask for Jesus to be our Savior, we are asking Him to release and clear our sins. Furthermore, God now wants us to do the same thing for others. That means we decide to release and clear people's sins without them trying to earn it in some way.

As parents, we often make mistakes. This is just a simple fact in life. However, I find it interesting that so many parents, and kids for that matter, think that when a parent makes a mistake they need to make up for it by taking the kid out for ice cream or buying them a new toy or video game. Is that picture of forgiveness as God describes it? No. Could you imagine what our lives would be like if we had to go around and make up for all the stuff we did wrong before God would forgive us? It would be a nightmare.

The second part of forgiveness is that we learn to **See Past Another Person's Faults**. When people mess up and we forgive them, we have to not look at them as that person who did that one bad thing. Have you ever known someone who has been to prison? When you look at them do you get caught up thinking about the fact that that person was in jail once for doing something bad? It's easy to do. However, the Bible tells us that part of forgiveness is to see past what others have done wrong.

*The third part to what forgiveness is that we learn to **Excuse or Let Go of Anger**. Many people struggle with forgiveness because they think we are saying that what a person did to us is okay, that there wasn't anything wrong with the actions they did to us or the words they spoke against us. That's not what forgiveness is at all. They were still wrong. You're just not holding that thing against them anymore. However, until we let go of any of the anger associated with our feelings about that situation, we haven't actually forgiven them.*

Forgiveness is a really hard thing to do. The hurts we experience can go really deep. Part of our unwillingness to forgive is that we are afraid that since a person doesn't suffer for what they did to us it will most likely happen again. In another lesson in this series we mentioned that the things God commands us to do bring benefits to our lives. It's no different with forgiveness. In a nutshell, forgiveness sets us free. To be more specific, it sets us free from three different things.

The first thing that forgiveness sets us free from is **Guilt**. When we are angry at someone, we can easily feel guilty, or we feel guilty for the way we treated someone in return. Furthermore, when we choose to forgive others, we set them free from guilt as well. I don't know if you've ever felt guilty about something, but it's a terrible feeling. Guilt can easily overwhelm you and rob you of a life filled with joy and peace. Proverbs 4:23 tells us, *"Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do."* When we are free from guilt, we have done well to guard our hearts.

The second thing forgiveness frees us from is **Bitterness**. Hebrews 12:15 says, *"Look after each other so that none of you will miss out on the special favor of God. Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief*

rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison." That's just it, bitterness is a poison. No one would willingly drink a bottle of poison that could possibly kill them, yet that's exactly what we are doing to our spiritual lives when we allow bitterness to linger around. You know, the even goofier thing is that those with bitterness are the only ones really suffering from it. The people that you are bitter at don't usually suffer because of it. So does it make any sense to allow bitterness into your heart? Absolutely not!

The last thing that forgiveness frees us from is **Fear**. We mentioned earlier that sometimes we refuse to forgive others because we are afraid that the same thing will happen again. Fear can be a crippling thing in the lives of people. I've known people who suffered emotionally and physically in life because they allowed fear to overwhelm them in life. That root of fear began with their unwillingness to forgive something terrible that happened in their life. Now I'm not suggesting that forgiveness is easy. It's anything but. However, it really is our only option if we want to have a healthy life.

I want to answer one more question dealing with forgiveness. This is such an important thing to nail down in life, so I just want to be thorough with you. The question I want to answer is this; why should I forgive others? The first and simplest answer is because **You Have Been Forgiven**. Hebrews 8:12 says, *"And I will forgive their wrongdoings, and I will never again remember their sins."* You and I didn't deserve the forgiveness we received from God when we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, therefore, we should expect others to earn their forgiveness from us. In fact, Jesus told Peter to continually forgive others when Peter asked Him how often to forgive someone. Do you remember what Jesus told him? He told Peter to forgive someone seventy times seven. In other words, you keep forgiving them.

The second answer to why you should forgive others is that forgiveness is the **Key to Your Relationship with Others and God**. If we want to grow in our walk with God, then we have to forgive. There is no way around it. Matthew 6:14-15 says, *If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.*" Those are Jesus' own words. If you want God to forgive you, you have to be willing to forgive others. Again, this may be a process depending on what has been done to you, but you only have much to gain by deciding to forgive, and everything to lose by refusing to forgive.

Look It Up:

Let's all open our Bibles to Galatians 6:5. I'm going to read this out loud for everyone. You can follow along in your Bibles, if you like.

Colossians 3:13; "You must make allowances for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends

you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

- Does that verse say that you *may* make allowances for others, or that you *can if you choose to*?
- How many of you are hoping that God will hear and answer your everyday prayers? The Bible tells us that when we have unforgiveness in our hearts it hinders our prayers.
- Have you ever done something to someone that you asked for forgiveness from, but they wouldn't forgive you? How did that make you feel? Do you feel like you are the same person who did that bad thing from before, or that you've changed?
- What makes forgiveness hard for you? How can we work past those things?
- Can you think of someone that you need to forgive for something? Let's take a few minutes and pray silently to God, letting Him know that we forgive those people for what they did and that we want God's help to process that forgiveness in our hearts and minds.

Closing

Forgiveness is one of the difficult things in life to develop, yet it brings with it some of the greatest benefits. I know many people think that forgiving people means that we just allow people to mistreat us for any reason that they want to and then we just simply forgive them. The Bible doesn't say that we have to be dumb in life. We are allowed to protect ourselves from allowing certain things to happen to us. That's called setting boundaries. However, we still need to forgive when something does go wrong. Remember, though, **Forgiveness** sets people **Free**!

Pray Together!

Leading Prayer in SLAM

Come Together:

Bring the children together in a circle. Ask if there is anything that they would like to pray for.

Some Questions you may ask to help them think:

- Is there something that you would like to praise God and thank him for this week?
- Are you sick or do you need healing?
- Have you hurt anyone or been hurt by something this week that you need to ask forgiveness for?

Pray:

Pray together— there are two choices here:

They can pray for each other or they can pray for themselves (out loud).

Praying for each other:

If they would like someone else to pray for them ask the child to sit in the middle and for another child to pray for them (ask for volunteers). If both children are comfortable they can lay hands on as they pray.

Praying for themselves:

If they would like to pray for themselves they can either sit in the middle or where they are. Ask them to pray in a loud voice so everyone can hear. We want them to be comfortable so be flexible and sensitive to the child's needs.

Continue through the group until everyone has been prayed for.

Listen:

Then take time to sit and listen to God and see if there is anything that he would like to say to the group. Ask each child to sit silently and listen to God. Explain that God may speak to them all in different ways, e.g. a picture, an idea a colour etc. Then after a minute ask if there is anything the children felt God was saying.

Write:

If anyone has anything please write it in the SLAM Prayer Journal with the date, service time and child's name. Then have a leader thank God for the lesson and any healings, words or pictures.