



LESSON 1: FORGIVENESS STARTS WITH JESUS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: The forgiveness we are supposed to extend to others comes from the forgiveness that originates in Christ.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY’VE LEARNED: To be more aware of how they see the concept of forgiveness at work in their lives.

Scripture Focus: Mark 2:1-12

OVERVIEW: No study of forgiveness is complete without first laying the foundation for how we are to approach the concept of forgiveness. Of course, the foundation of forgiveness is found in Christ. Your students will see in this lesson that Jesus alone is able to forgive sins, and that He willingly does so as part of His plan to redeem all humankind. This lesson will serve as a foundational one, setting up the other lessons in this series.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Forgiveness Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your “Jesus And Forgiveness Lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video,” click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-forgiveness-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what’s happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter’s firsthand accounts.
- **Time frame:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50’s AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus’ identity.

THE SETTING

A lot happens early on in the chapters preceding Mark 2. Jesus has been baptized and lead into the wilderness. He’s called His disciples, driven out some evil spirits, and healed a bunch of folks. This sets up the very interesting encounter with the paralytic and the Teachers of the Law in Mark 2.

THE MAIN POINT

You’ll use the story of Jesus and the paralytic, in addition to a couple of supporting verses, to simply remind students that all this talk of forgiveness would be nothing without Jesus. Forgiveness starts with Christ. True forgiveness is born in Jesus and His plan. Without Christ, there would be no true understanding of forgiveness, because in Jesus, we see perfect mercy on display. This is the brand of forgiveness you’ll be challenging your students to embrace in the upcoming lessons.

Forgiveness is bound up in who Jesus is. This is why He so naturally tells the paralytic that he is forgiven. Jesus was not ignoring the man’s condition. On the contrary, He was seeing the most pressing condition the man had: a soul encumbered by unpaid sin-debt. Jesus rightly took care of the man’s most dire need. But in response to those who thought His words were heretical, Jesus showed His power by healing the man. The healing of His physical needs, an amazing feat, served to validate Jesus’ identity and thus His ability to forgive sins. Again, you’ll help students see that the forgiveness that Christ offered to the world is the foundation for the forgiveness we offer to others.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To get students thinking about the idea of forgiveness and where they see it at work in the world around them.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, explain to students that you're going to be starting a four-week look at the concept of forgiveness. To kick off this first lesson, you're going to engage in a brief discussion about forgiveness and where they encounter it in their worlds.

Start by **asking something similar to the following:**

- **When you think about forgiveness, what do you think about?**

Answers will vary.

- **What is so hard about forgiveness?**

Answers will vary. You might want to help students see that for most people, it's not easy to show kindness to someone who has wronged them. It can feel good (in a sort of twisted way) or even powerful to hold a grudge. Surrendering that may feel like we're giving up too much.

- **Have you ever had to ask forgiveness from someone? How did it feel when you were doing it? How did it feel months later?**

Answers will vary.

THEN, after you've allowed students to discuss this for a moment, ask something similar to the following:

- **You know, we actually see forgiveness come up in places other than relationships. Have you ever heard of someone, or some entity forgiving a debt?**

Answer: Explain to students that on rare occasions, a bank or lending agency will forgive a debt. It's most common for countries to forgive debts incurred by other countries who may have experienced an economic crisis, or something similar.

- **How is forgiving a debt owed and forgiving something that someone has done wrong to you similar?**

Answer: In both cases, there is a legitimate "wrong" that was incurred. In both cases, there is one party who failed to do the right thing. And in both cases, the wronged party reaches out and forgives, or wipes away, the "wrong."

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by explaining to your students that in today's lesson, you'll see how forgiveness flows from who Jesus is. Say something like:

- **We can't really talk about forgiveness without talking about how Jesus is the most perfect model of forgiveness, and that only HE has the power to forgive. He offers us His amazing mercy in spite of our continuous tendency to sin. He is all about forgiving us, as we will see in this lesson. Let's jump in and see what we can learn about Jesus and forgiveness.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help students understand that a forever-future with God is found through faith in Christ.
- **Set-Up:** None.

FIRST, have your students turn to Mark chapter 2. While they are finding the passage, take a moment to provide some context for the passage you'll be studying using the Bible Background. When students have found Mark 2, read or have a student read verses 1-4. When they've finished, lead students in a brief discussion by **asking something similar to the following**:

- **Just to make sure we're all on the same page with what's going on, someone quickly summarize the scene that was just depicted.**
- **What does Mark mean when he says the man was a "paralytic"?**
Answer: The man was probably paralyzed in some capacity, whether it was full paralysis or partial paralysis.
- **What happened on the roof?**
Answer: Explain to students that a typical house in this time period and region would have had a flat roof with outside stairs to access it. The roof was made of a combination of wooden beams, possibly tile, and some mixture of compacted dirt and thatch. So, digging it up would have been relatively easy.
- **What were the friends hoping to accomplish? Why was this significant based on what Jesus was doing?**
Answer: It appears like the friends wanted their friend to be healed by Jesus. This is interesting because, at the moment, Jesus is not healing anyone. He is preaching.

THEN, now that the stage is set, read or have a student read verse 5-7. **Then, ask:**

- **How do you think the man and his friends responded to Jesus' words here? Why were His words unexpected?**
Answers will vary. Lead students to see that we're of course speculating and that we can't know exactly what the men are thinking. But since they apparently had in mind that Jesus would heal their friend, Jesus' words had to have caught them off guard. And keep in mind, Jesus was early in His ministry. Few people would have believed He had the power or authority to forgive sins.
- **This sentence is actually the heart of the passage. Why was Jesus so bold to make this comment?**
Answer: Only God can forgive sins. By saying He could forgive the man, Jesus was saying He was God.
- **What is the issue the "teachers of the Law" had?**
Answer: They didn't believe Jesus was the Son of God. Because of this, they viewed Jesus' comment as blasphemous.

Explain that the "teachers of the Law's" objection set the table for an awesome moment in which Jesus makes a huge statement about His identity and His authority. Read or have a student read 8-12. Then, lead students in the following discussion. **Ask:**

- **How does Jesus' ability to heal the man validate His authority to forgive sins?**
Answer: Jesus ties the two together. He basically says, "You think forgiving sins is hard? Well, if I can do something as amazing as healing this guy, I can forgive his sins, as well."
- **What does this account say about how Jesus views the priority of our needs? What need did Jesus meet first in the man?**
Answer: He didn't meet the physical need first. Jesus knew that the man's most pressing need was his spiritual need.

- **What was the man's spiritual need? Why was that the greater need?**

Answer: We know that our sins earn us eternal separation from God, and that on our own, we're helpless to account for our sins. Jesus knew that He alone could forgive our sins and make peace between God and us.

NEXT, explain to students that offering forgiveness for sins is a huge part of Jesus' identity. You could even say that this was His primary reason for coming to earth in the first place. If you want, read the following verse to back this point up:

- **She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.**
- Matthew 1:21

FINALLY, help students see that even at the end of His life, when He had been unjustly tried, convicted, abused, and ultimately executed, some of Jesus' final words show how committed He was to the mission of forgiveness. Say:

- **Hanging on the cross, Jesus cried out to God and said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Jesus is the source of forgiveness. He is the most perfect picture of forgiveness. And as we will learn over the next few lessons, we are called to be people who give the same kind of forgiveness Jesus has extended to us. As we move forward, we're going to learn a lot. But let's make sure we remember this: the forgiveness we are to extend to others comes from the forgiveness that originates in Christ.**

Make sure no one has any questions, then move to wrap up the lesson with the **Last Word**.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students be more aware of how they see the concept of forgiveness at work in their lives.
- **Set-Up:** Provide enough copies of the "Last Word Activity Sheet" (Located in your Lesson 1 folder) so that each of your students can have one. Provide a pen or a marker for each student.

FIRST, remind students that this lesson is sort of a foundational lesson that's designed to kick off your four-week study of forgiveness. As such, you really just want to challenge them to be aware of the forgiveness that's going on all around them. You'll dig a little deeper into the personal applications of forgiveness in the next three lessons. But for now, just get students thinking about how they extend and have been extended forgiveness in their lives.

NEXT, draw students' attention to the "Last Word Activity Sheet." Explain that the four silhouettes are going to help them think about the concept of forgiveness. Instruct them to think over the last few weeks, months, and maybe even years. Have them think about times they have extended forgiveness to others, and times when they have had forgiveness extended to them. For each instance, they can remember a time when they have forgiven someone else, have them draw a "frowny face" on a silhouette. For each time they can remember being forgiven, have them draw a "smiley face" on the silhouette. Allow them a few minutes to do this.

THEN, have students share their mix of "smiley" and "frowny" faces. Ask them to call out how many of each they have. When they've finished, lead them in a brief discussion. **Ask:**

- **Why do you think I asked you to draw a "frowny face" on the faces that represented you forgiving someone else?**
Answer: Because in order to forgive someone, we have to have been wronged by him or her. And being wronged hurts. But, as we'll learn in the next few weeks, we're called to forgive others. And when we forgive others, we make a positive out of a negative.

- **Why do you think I asked you to draw a “smiley face” on the faces that represented you being forgiven by someone else?**

Answer: When someone forgives us, it means we have wronged him or her. And to be forgiven for our bad actions is a wonderful thing. Forgiveness can repair a relationship like nothing else. It brings a smile to our faces.

FINALLY, close by **saying something like the following:**

- **This activity was just a simple way to get you thinking about where you see forgiveness in your life. As you go throughout your week, I want you to be looking for chances you have to extend forgiveness and have it extended to you. Keep an eye out for places you see forgiveness. And be ready to go a little deeper on this topic in our next lesson.**

If no one has any questions or observations, close in prayer.

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LESSON 2: FORGIVE TO BE FORGIVEN

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: Forgiveness to others is a natural response to the forgiveness we have received from God.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To identify anyone in their lives to whom they need to extend forgiveness, and to commit to forgiving him or her.

Scripture Focus: Matthew 18:21-35

Supporting Scripture: Matthew 6:14-15, Mark 11:25

OVERVIEW: We don't like to think about it, but Jesus is really clear about one thing: God's willingness to forgive our sins is tied to our willingness to forgive others. It's a bit of a theological brain bender (after all, we are saved by grace through faith and not by our own works, right?). But when you encounter Jesus' words in the Bible, there really is no equivocation. In the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, and elsewhere, Jesus says that to be forgiven, we must extend forgiveness. This is the heart of this study and is an important lesson for our students to learn. They will be challenged to seek out people to whom they have not forgiven, and extend mercy and grace.

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THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his gospel.
- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew’s gospel being written in the late 50’s or 60’s AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.
- **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

THE SETTING

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant comes shortly after some pretty big moments in Matthew’s Gospel narrative. In Matthew 16, we see Peter confess Jesus as the Christ. In Matthew 17, we see Jesus transfigured in front of His most beloved disciples. These brief snapshots, and several more like them, leading up to Jesus’ telling of the parable. All of this occurs in the time leading up to Jesus’ triumphant entry just a week before His crucifixion.

THE MAIN POINT

The main point of this lesson is simple in its directness, though somewhat more complex in its application. Jesus unequivocally said that we would not be forgiven unless we forgive others. We like to believe in “cheap grace,” a phrase coined by the famous theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This is grace that doesn’t cost us anything. But Jesus talks about a different kind of grace here. Jesus urges us to extend the very same brand of grace we receive from God.

If we are believers, will God withhold forgiveness if we do not forgive others? This is the right question, but the answer may best be found coming at it from a different angle. The question might be best asked like this: “Can someone who is unwilling to forgive others truly have been transformed by saving faith in God?” Though God alone knows the answer with complete confidence, it seems like the answer would be “no.” If people are unwilling to show forgiveness, it would seem to be a mark that they have not been truly saved by Christ and therefore would not know the forgiveness God offers. So, Jesus’ teaching here seems to speak less about our ability to earn or assure God’s forgiveness based on our actions, and more about the state of our heart and whether or not we’ve been transformed by faith in Christ and His work on the cross.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help your students see that to accomplish or achieve certain things, specific steps or processes have to happen.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, remind your students that this is the second lesson in a four-lesson look at forgiveness. Remind them that you're going to go a little deeper in what it means to be forgiven and to forgive others. But first, explain to students that you're going to ask them a few questions that look at certain processes or paths that lead to some specific outcomes. Have students help you break down what these processes or paths look like.

There's no absolute right answer for these, so to speak. You'll know if your students are on track or not. Allow them to discuss each of the following questions, and maybe even add a few of your own. **Ask something like:**

- **To win an MVP trophy, what do you have to do?**
- **To get into college, what do you have to do?**
- **To win a gymnastics or cheerleading competition, what has to happen?**
- **What do you have to do to get a good grade on a test?**
- **To have that special someone join you as a date for the prom, what has to happen?**
- **If you want to borrow the car for the weekend, do you have to make sure you do anything first?**
- **If you want a scholarship to play college sports, what do you have to do first?**

THEN, when they've discussed each one, lead them in a brief discussion. **Ask:**

- **What is true in each of these situations?**

Answer: To get a certain thing, or realize a specific outcome, you have to do or achieve some specific tasks. You don't get a college scholarship in football because you're a nice guy. It just doesn't happen. You have to be a highly skilled athlete, which in turn requires a ton of commitment.

- **What's the most rewarding thing you've ever achieved or accomplished?**

Answers will vary.

- **It might seem at first that it would be awesome to have some of these achievements without having to work on them, doesn't it? But why would this not be that awesome at all?**

Answer: Because it would cheapen the accomplishment. If everyone could win a gymnastics competition regardless of whether or not they actually knew gymnastics, it wouldn't be a special achievement.

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by explaining to your students that whether we like it or not, Jesus seems to imply that forgiveness works this way too. **Say something like:**

- **We don't like to hear it. But we're about to see Jesus put something of a condition on our forgiveness. We're about to learn that the Bible is clear: for you to be forgiven, you have to follow a certain course of action laid out by God. Let's take a closer look.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that as God has forgiven us, we should forgive others. The Lord has no patience for those who do not practice this.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, take a moment and review last week's lesson. **Ask** if anyone can remember what you studied and if anything specific stands out to them. You may use the following bullet points to help if need be:

- **The forgiveness we are to extend to others comes from the forgiveness that originates in Christ.**
- **We need to be more aware of how we see the concept of forgiveness at work in our lives.**

THEN, when you've finished, explain to students that you'll be looking at a passage from Matthew 18. While they're finding the chapter, provide some context for what you're about to study by referencing the Details and the Setting sections of the Bible Background. When students have found the chapter, read or have a student read Matthew 18:21-25. Then, lead students in a discussion by **asking something similar to the following**:

- **You might not pick this up at first glance, but Peter was actually trying to show off a bit in his question. In Jewish culture at that time, forgiving someone seven times would have been extravagant. Peter might have expected to hear Jesus say, "Wow. That's awesome Peter. Seven times is a lot. Well done." What was Jesus saying to Peter in His response?**
Answer: It pretty much blew Peter out of the water. Jesus was basically saying, "Look how incredibly amazing and overwhelming my standard for mercy and love is."
- **Do you think Jesus was literally saying that we should forgive someone 77 times? So, on the 78th time we're off the hook? (No) What point do you think He was trying to make?**
Answer: As Christ-followers, we have to forgive people a lot. We have to go way beyond our expectations in how we show forgiveness to others.
- **Summarize what's happening in verses 23-25.**

Make sure before moving on that you help students understand the MASSIVE nature of this debt. **Say something like:**

- **10,000 talents is an astronomical sum. The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Zondervan) has this to say about the amount owed: "Some recent estimates suggest a dollar value of twelve million; but with inflation and fluctuating precious metal prices, this could be over a billion dollars in today's currency." Whoa! So, we need to understand right away that this man owed a debt he could never, ever, ever hope to repay. Nothing he could do, not even selling himself and his family into slavery could even come close to paying this debt.**

NEXT, have a student read verses 26-32. **Then, ask:**

- **Summarize what just happened.**

- **OK, let's do a quick comparison. How much did we say the servant owed to the Master? (10,000 talents, the equivalent to millions perhaps a billion dollars.) What was the amount the second servant owed the first servant? (a hundred denarii) Can you guess which one is the smaller debt?**

Answer: The denarii is the smaller debt. In fact, a hundred denarii is about a hundred day's wages for a laborer in this time period. So, it wasn't nothing, but compared to what the first servant owed the master, it's insignificant.

- **Why is the servant's response to the second servant so appalling?**

Answer: He had just been forgiven an insurmountable debt. He and his family had been spared. And here he is treating someone who owed him far less money in such a terrible way.

- **How do you feel about the first servant? What kind of person does he seem to be?**

Answers will vary.

- **THEN, complete the parable by reading verses 32-35. Then, ask:**

- **Why was the master so upset at the servant?**

Answer: Because he showed such wickedness to his fellow servant after being shown such kindness by the master.

- **Let's put Jesus' words into perspective. Jesus wasn't saying that God would literally punish us and throw us in jail if we didn't forgive others. A parable is a story that makes a point. What point was Jesus trying to make?**

Answer: Taken at face value, Jesus is saying that if we do not forgive others, we shouldn't expect God to forgive us. If we're unmerciful with others, we should expect God to be unmerciful with us.

NEXT, explain that this isn't the only place where the Bible says this, far from it. Read or have two students read Matthew 6:14-15 and Mark 11:25. When you finish, **ask:**

- **How does this make you feel?**

Answers will vary.

- **Does this feel like God is placing a condition on your forgiveness? Does it feel like you have to do something to be forgiven of your sins?**

Answers will vary.

- **In Romans 10:9 Paul says, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.' In Ephesians 2:8-9 he says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." These verses say that salvation, i.e., the forgiveness of our sin debt, is through the work of Christ and not anything we do. How does Jesus' words about forgiveness seem to contradict these verses?**

Answers will vary. But it's OK if students say that the condition Jesus makes seems to put a human-centered, works-driven angle on salvation.

Help students see that while this seems like it could be a contradiction, we know that Paul wouldn't contradict Jesus' words; God's Word doesn't contradict itself. Explain that there is a way to look at this that makes perfect sense. **Say something like:**

- **When people are truly transformed by a saving relationship with Christ, they are a new creation. The mercy and love that flowed out of God is alive in them as a result. So, if people can live their lives being completely unmerciful, totally harsh, and totally unforgiving, we might be inclined to ask if this person truly had ever been transformed by faith in Christ. While this is a question only God knows the answer to, it's a valid way of thinking about Jesus' teaching on forgiveness. The heart of the matter is this: if you have known the overwhelming mercy and**

grace of God, you will in turn show that forgiveness to others. It won't always be easy, and you may not do it perfectly. But as a child of God, you will be forgiving. Someone who is not forgiving is not a child of God, and therefore can't have experienced God's forgiveness.

Make sure students understand this distinction.

FINALLY, remind students of the main point of the lesson. **Say something like this:**

- **The point this parable makes is quite simple: as people who have known the overwhelming, all-encompassing forgiveness of God, we absolutely, positively cannot hold other people's wrongs against them. And it doesn't matter how horrible the things they've done are. Just like the servant who owed the unpayable debt, God wiped away all of our sins. And Jesus was clear: He expects us to do the same to others, no matter how costly it is for us to do so.**

Make sure no one has any questions, then move to wrap up the lesson with the **Last Word**.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students identify anyone in their lives to whom they need to extend forgiveness, and to commit to forgiving him or her.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need to print one copy of the "Last Word Activity Sheet" (located in your Lesson 2 folder) for each student. You'll also need to have something for students to write with.

FIRST, explain to students that the key to the truth they've learned today is to personalize it. Remind them that it's one thing to know they are called to do something, but it's another thing to actually do it. (If you have a story where you forgave someone of a significant wrong, it would be a great idea to share.)

THEN, distribute to each student the "Last Word Activity Sheet." Students who were present for Lesson 1 might recognize the overall look of the sheet. Remind students that in Lesson 1 you had them think of times when they had forgiven someone or had been forgiven by someone. Explain that today, you're going to challenge them to be a little more specific.

Instruct students to look at the silhouettes on their paper. Have them take a moment and think of anyone in their lives whom they have not forgiven. Explain to students that this can be a painful thing for some of them. Challenge them to do it anyway. Encourage them to truly evaluate their hearts and be honest with themselves. If there is someone they have not forgive and need to, challenge them to write that person's initials on one of the silhouettes. Some of your students may have more than one. This is fine. The point is to allow them the chance to face this head on. Allow students a moment to process this.

NEXT, inform students that you're going to lead them in a time of prayer. You're going to pray that God will lead each of you to really look within and be honest about any grudges you're holding. Inform students that in the middle of your prayer you're going to allow a time of silence. Explain that this is a time for them to pray to God, asking the Holy Spirit to help them find the strength to forgive this person, or these people. Once you've set this up, pray for your students.

FINALLY, when you've finished the prayer, close the lesson by encouraging your students and by empathizing with them. **Say something like:**

- **Forgiveness is not easy. And for some of us, the wrong that has been committed against may seem unforgiveable. But here's the deal: When you forgive someone, you not only act in a Christ-like way, you free yourself from the power that wrong has over you. You're essentially saying, "I will not be held back by the pain this is causing me.**

I am in control of my life. And with God's help, I will choose to forgive." Forgiveness may not happen all at once. For some people it can be a process that takes some time. But what we learned today is that if we love God and believe in Him, we don't have a choice. We have to be people who extend forgiveness to others.

Make sure students know that you are there for them if they need someone to talk to. Then, if no one has any questions or observations, wrap up the lesson.

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LESSON 3: FORGIVE WITHOUT LIMITS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: We can't put any limits on our forgiveness; there is never a moment when we can say, "enough forgiveness."

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To accept that the emotional turmoil caused by forgiving people who repeatedly hurt them makes them more Christ-like than they know.

Scripture Focus: Luke 17:1-4

OVERVIEW: At our best, we'll forgive someone and make efforts to move on. There is often the assumption that this is a one-time deal, that we need to tough it out and do the hard work of forgiveness and then move on. But what happens when we're dragged back into the messy pain of being wronged and trying to extend forgiveness? What happens when the person who wronged us wrongs us again? There is only so much we can be expected to do, right? Wrong! Jesus makes it clear: as often as we are hurt, that is how often we are to forgive. As hard as this seems, it's the way Christ sees us. It's a high challenge, but one that aligns our students with Jesus and His ways.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Forgiveness Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Forgiveness Lesson 3 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-forgiveness-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian, and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THE SETTING

Luke chapter 17 comes during a huge block of writing that contains a lot of Jesus’ teachings. In chapter 15, Luke shows Jesus addressing the Pharisees with the parables of the lost things, which, of course, ends with the parable of the prodigal son. Chapter 16 sees Jesus leveling His sights at the Pharisees, teaching on such topics as the love of money, divorce, and mercy to the poor. The passage you’ll look at comes at the beginning of chapter 17 and forms the last section before a transition to a new section of discourse.

THE MAIN POINT

This is an interesting passage in which Jesus covers a lot in a few short verses. First, Jesus acknowledges that sin is something we can’t be free from this side of heaven. It happens. But Jesus strongly warns against being people who lead others to sin. Maybe there is some truth here that is applicable in our study of forgiveness. The underlying truth behind forgiveness is that someone has wronged you. As Christ-followers, Jesus is reminding us that we can’t be people who wrong others, not only because this is sinful, but because we might put someone in the position of struggling to forgive us.

But the real heart of this passage is verses 3-4. Jesus lays out a simple framework for how we should approach forgiveness (directly telling others how they have wronged us) and what should be expected of those to whom we point out his or her wrongdoing (that they would stop). Then Jesus drives home His point: no matter how often we’re wronged, we must continue to forgive. There isn’t a moment when we can say, “OK. Enough is enough. No more forgiveness for you.” As long as we live, we must be willing to extend God’s mercy to others, no matter how difficult this must be.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To get students thinking about the idea of how much forgiveness is enough.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need a copy of the "Lead-In Activity Sheet" (found in your Lesson 3 folder). You'll want to display it by either printing it out or displaying it digitally (tablet, laptop, or projector). To make this activity personal and a little more fun, consider downloading a picture of a specific celebrity or musician that your students might have a "love/hate" relationship with, or if you live in a part of the country where there is a heated sports rivalry arrange to show an image of one of the team's logos. Be prepared to show the picture at the end of your discussion.

FIRST, remind students that this is the third lesson in your four-week study of Jesus and Forgiveness. Explain that this week you're going to be learning a pretty interesting truth about what Jesus expects when it comes to our forgiveness. But that first you going to have a little discussion to get the lesson started.

THEN, say something like:

- **How much is too much? Are there certain things in life, certain good things, things you enjoy, that you can simply get too much of? For instance . . .**

At this point, show the first image from the Lead-In Activity Sheet, a slice of pizza. **Ask something like:**

- **Who can tell me what your favorite food is?**
Allow students to call out their favorite foods.
- **Choose one student and ask: What would the scenario be where you could have too much of your favorite food? Is that possible or impossible?**
Allow various answers, and if you have time ask multiple students their opinions.
- **Why is it that you can have too much of your favorite food? It's delicious, right? Why wouldn't you want to eat it all the time?**
Allow students to answer as they will, but lead them to see that even our favorite food would become dull and boring, and maybe even gross after too much of it.

NEXT, repeat a similar discussion with each of the next two slides. Show the image of the electronics and lead students to discuss if it would ever be possible to have too many awesome gadgets and electronics. Allow the discussion to go where it will, but look for a chance to make the point that if our world was overrun with electronics, we'd lose the human element of our culture.

THEN, do the same for the image of the teenagers. Inform students that these individuals represent their friends and lead a lively discussion about how, though we all love our friends, sometimes we simply need a break or some time to ourselves.

NEXT, if you have downloaded an image of a celebrity, or musician, or a sports team, have some fun by engaging students on how

much of whatever it is you've chosen is too much of a "good" thing.

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by explaining to your students that this lesson is all about how for some good things, there is never too much. **Say something like:**

- **We're about to see what Jesus says about how much forgiveness we can dish out before it's too much of a good thing. Ready? Let's jump in.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that we can't put any limits on our forgiveness; there is never a moment when we can say, "enough forgiveness."
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, encourage your students to see who can remember anything about what you've studied the last couple of weeks. **Ask students** if they can remember specific points from lessons 1 and 2. If you need to supplement their thoughts, do so by referencing the following bullet points:

- **Lesson 1:** The forgiveness we are to extend to others comes from the forgiveness that originates in Christ.
- **Lesson 1:** We need to be more aware of how we see the concept of forgiveness at work in our lives.
- **Lesson 2:** God will not forgive us unless we forgive others.
- **Lesson 2:** We must identify anyone in our lives to whom we need to extend forgiveness, and commit to forgiving him or her.

THEN, inform your students that today's lesson packs a lot of truth into just a few verses. Have students turn to Luke 17 while you give some of the setting for the passage. See if anyone can remember any facts about who Luke was and why he wrote his Gospel. (Supplement their answers by referencing the Details section of the Bible Background.) If you choose, set the context for the passage by summarizing the Setting section of the Bible Background. Once you've finished, read or have students read Luke 17:1-4.

NEXT, explain that you're going to go back and dig through the passage a little deeper. Instruct students to look back at verses 1-2. **Ask:**

- **What is Jesus saying here about sin in the first part of verse 1?**
Answer: That it is inevitable. There will be temptations that we will give in to.
- **Based on what you know about the Bible and about Jesus' life and teachings, do you think this gives us permission to not worry about sinning? Explain your answer.**
Answer: Help students process this. Remind them that our goal is not to be good people, but to be Christ-like (Ephesians 5:1-2). There's a difference! Christ is the standard, and we're called to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). So while Jesus knows we will sin because we all have a sin-nature (Romans 3:23), this isn't saying that we can approach sin lightly.
- **Now, look at the second part of verse 1 and all of verse 2. This gets really interesting. What is Jesus saying here?**
Answer: Jesus is warning about being someone who causes others (specifically here "little ones," meaning those young in their faith) to be tempted to sin. We can't truly cause others to sin, as the decision to sin is made by the individual. But we can lead others to being tempted to sin by our actions and words.

- **So, since most of us don't work in mills anymore, here's a refresher: a millstone was a large, round stone weighing a hundred pounds or more. It would have been pulled by a donkey or ox and used to ground-up grain. So, knowing this, what is Jesus saying here? What does He mean?**

Answer: Help students see that Jesus is comparing the earthly to the eternal. It would stink to be thrown into the ocean with a hundred-pound rock tied to us. We'd drown pretty quickly and this is bad. But Jesus is saying that tempting others to sin is worse than this. He can say this because Jesus rightly values the eternal over the earthly.

This raises an interesting point when it comes to our discussion on forgiveness. You don't want to push this too far because it might be reading a little more into the text than is actually there, but it's an interesting point to consider. **Ask:**

- **We learned last week that not forgiving someone is something Jesus is strongly against, right?**

Answer: Yes. Maybe you want to remind students of Jesus' words in Matthew 6:14-15: "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

- **And we talked last week about how forgiving someone is not easy. It's hard. Sometimes it's really hard, right?**

Answer: Right!

- **So, when we wrong other people, when we hurt them through something we say or do, we put them in a situation where they have to forgive us to be in obedience with Jesus' commands. We've already said that this is a hard thing for us sinful humans to do. So, is it fair to say that when we do wrong to people we're kind of putting them in a situation where they are tempted to NOT forgive us? Why or why not?**

Answers will vary. Again, it's probably a side point, but a very interesting one as far as your discussion on forgiveness. And something that will make your students think, which is never a bad thing.

THEN, help students see that verses 3 and 4 are the heart of the passage and the main point you want to get across today. Have students look back at these verses and **ask:**

- **Jesus is giving us a bit of a framework for how to deal with other people's hurtful actions toward us. It hinges on two words. Do you know what the words "rebuke" and "repent" mean? What does it mean to rebuke someone?**

Answer: To rebuke someone is basically to point out to someone the wrong that he or she has done.

- **What does this look like in a modern context? Give an example.**

Answers will vary. But it simply means going to the person who has done wrong to you and telling him or her what he or she did.

- **Why is this so hard for us to do?**

Answer: It's awkward; we don't like confrontation; etc.

- **What does the word "repent" mean? In other words, what are we looking for from someone?**

Answer: The word "repent" means to turn away from doing wrong. The word picture is someone walking in one direction and then turning 180 degrees and walking in the other direction.

- **What is the modern-day application of this? What does it mean when the person who has wronged us repents?**

Answer: At the risk of oversimplifying it, it means that he or she apologizes for the wrong he or she did and stops doing it. Stopping our hurtful actions is an important aspect of repentance. You may take a moment to explain why it is so important for us to repent after we have done wrong to others, and why this is just as important as forgiveness.

At this point set up Jesus words in verse 4 as they are the gist of the lesson. **Say something like:**

- **So, up to this point, we're tracking with Jesus, right? It all sounds good. We tell people what they did, they say**

they're sorry, they stop doing it, and we're all good. The only problem is that sometimes life doesn't work like that. Occasionally, people will hurt us again. And sometimes they'll hurt us over and over. Luckily Jesus says in verse 4 that we only have to forgive people once, right? Wrong!

Ask:

- **Summarize what Jesus is saying in verse 4.**

Answer: Jesus is not literally saying that seven is the magic number or the limit of how much we should forgive someone. What He's saying is that no matter how many times a person hurts us, we must extend forgiveness to him or her.

- **Ugh! This is SO hard, isn't it? Why is it so hard for us to forgive people who hurt us over and over again?**

Answers will vary.

- **Why do you think Jesus asks something of us that seems so impossible?**

Answer: Jesus is only asking of us the same thing He does for us. When we sin, we wrong God over and over again. And yet Jesus has forgiven us once and for all, no matter how often we may hurt Him or fall short of His expectations for us.

FINALLY, begin to transition to the Last Word by **saying something like the following:**

- **We are Jesus' plan to show His love and mercy to a world that desperately needs Him. We are His hands and feet and voice in this world. When we show people the same kind of forgiveness Jesus shows us, we are showing them the power Jesus has to radically transform our lives. We show people that Jesus is real and that He matters. Even though it's tough, it's part of being a Christ-follower. We must be willing to forgive over and over again.**

Make sure no one has any questions, then move to wrap up the lesson with the **Last Word**.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students accept that the emotional turmoil caused by forgiving people who repeatedly hurt them makes them more Christ-like than they know.
- **Set-Up:** You can do this a few ways. The simplest way would be to have a three sheets of poster board, with a handful of markers, available to students. You'll want a way to hang the poster board up on the wall when the time is right. You'll need to write the following statements at the top of the poster board, one statement on each board:
 - **When people hurt me it feels like _____.**
 - **When someone does me wrong again and again, it makes me feel _____.**
 - **But I will choose to forgive them because _____.**
- **Of course, there are a few ways you might do this digitally. (For example: Have teenagers text their responses to an assistant's phone and have him or her type them out real-time to display on a PowerPoint slide.) But that will be dictated by your set-up.**

FIRST, remind students of Jesus' moments in the Garden of Gethsemane when He was facing the cross. Remind them that He wept bitterly and was in deep anguish. Remember His words in Luke 22:42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." **Say something like:**

- **The cup Jesus wanted God the Father to take was the cross. Jesus knew what lay in store for Him. But it wasn't just the brutal nature of His death. It was taking on the pain of the world's sin that was so agonizing to Him. But Jesus willingly took your sin on Him to forgive you. Jesus knows the hurt forgiveness causes. He doesn't call you to do**

anything He hasn't experienced a million times over.

THEN, explain to students that you're going to give them a chance to own the emotional aspect of the cost of forgiveness and that you're going to do it as a group. Hang up the poster board where students can see them. Explain that you want them to all approach the different boards and, using the markers you've provided, write how they would answer the question. Allow students a chance to do this. You might even consider playing music while it's going on.

NEXT, when they've finished, acknowledge what they've written. Help them see that it IS painful to be hurt by people, especially to be hurt by people over and over again. But remind them of the power of forgiveness. More importantly, remind them that forgiveness aligns them with Jesus, and that is exactly who and where they want to be.

FINALLY, close by challenging them to embrace this teaching, even though it's difficult. Help them know that you or other adults are here for them if they need guidance, and that the Holy Spirit empowers them to live like Christ.

If no one has any questions or observations, close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

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LESSON 4: FORGIVE LIKE THE FORGIVER

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: As children of God, our identities as forgivers are wrapped up in God's identity as our Father.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To embrace a life that seeks to show love, kindness, and forgiveness to all people, especially those who are most undeserving of it.

Scripture Focus: Luke 6:27-37

OVERVIEW: This lesson will serve almost as a challenge to your students, a charge of sorts. It will end your four-lesson study of forgiveness by highlighting the fact that God's very nature is to forgive, love, and embrace those who deserve it the least. And as God's children, we are to have an element of His nature in us too, just as we share traits with our own parents. We must act as God's children, living our lives in such a way that our every action is saturated with mercy and love, especially to those who least deserve it.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

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THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THE SETTING

In Luke 6, Jesus is still in the early parts of His earthly ministry. Luke 4 shows Jesus being tempted by Satan, reading Scripture in the synagogue, healing the sick, teaching, and driving out demons. Luke 5 sees Jesus, among other things, calling His disciples. Luke 6 is basically a chapter consisting almost entirely of Jesus’ teaching. This passage on loving your enemies is another large block of Jesus’ teachings.

THE MAIN POINT

The main point of this lesson is to end your study of what Jesus had to say about forgiveness on a high note. It’s a challenge to students, and it goes like this: God is your Father. And as His children, our identities are wrapped up in His. If He is merciful and forgiving, we must be too. Just like we “inherit” other traits from our earthly parents, we must seek to embrace this trait as well.

This lesson is a “catch-all,” in which we see Jesus advocating a lifestyle of grace and mercy, not just thinking about forgiveness on a case-by-case approach. It’s a good, challenging lesson to end up with.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students begin to visualize what it means to “inherit” traits from our family members.
- **Set-Up:** You’ll want to display the image from the “Lead-In Activity Sheet” (located in your Lesson 4 Folder). It’s not essential, per se, but it sets a nice visual backdrop for your discussion.

FIRST, remind students that this is your last lesson in the Jesus and Forgiveness series. Explain that this lesson will function as a challenge to students to embrace certain aspects of God’s character. But before you get started, inform them that you want to lead them in a brief discussion.

THEN, ask them to think about their parents and/or grandparents. Have them think about their siblings if they have any. Then, show them the image from the Lead-In Activity Sheet. (Certainly, this part of the lesson may be sensitive to students who don’t know their biological parents. But, the point you’ll make in the Main Event may actually be more meaningful to these students. Be sensitive to their needs, but know that the lesson will not exclude them in any way.) Remind students that we all have aspects of our personalities that we get from our biological parents. Aspects that they got from their parents. Lead students in a short discussion about this idea. **Ask:**

- **Have you ever been told you look like your mother or father? What is it about you that you think makes people say that?**
- **Is there anything about the way you look that you can see in pictures of your grandparents when they were younger? Share what aspect it is.**
- **Beyond looks, do you talk or walk or act like your parents or grandparents? In what ways?**
- **How does this make you feel?**
Answers will vary. You may want to acknowledge that if they have a great relationship with their parents or grandparents, it may be pretty cool. If they don’t, it may be bittersweet.
- **How does it make you feel knowing that if you have children, they will probably share many of your characteristics?**

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by explaining to your students that if they have come to a saving relationship with Christ through faith, they have become children of God. **Say:**

- **As children of God, we take on aspects of His character, similar to how we do with our own parents. Our identity is wrapped up in God. And in today’s lesson, we’ll wrap up our last look at Jesus and Forgiveness by exploring this concept.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- ♦ **Goal:** To help your students understand that as children of God, our identities as forgivers is wrapped up in God's identity as our Father.
- ♦ **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, have students see who can remember the most about what you've studied this far. **Prompt students** as necessary using the bullet points below:

- ♦ **Lesson 1: The forgiveness we are to extend to others comes from the forgiveness that originates in Christ.**
- ♦ **Lesson 2: God will not forgive us unless we forgive others.**
- ♦ **Lesson 3: That we can't put any limits on our forgiveness; there is never a moment when we can say, "enough forgiveness."**

THEN, instruct students to turn to Luke 6 in their Bibles. Hopefully by this point, students can tell you a little about who Luke was, and maybe even the purpose behind why he wrote his gospel. Help fill in the blanks by referencing the Details section of the Bible Background. While students are finding Luke 6, provide the context for the passage by summarizing the Setting section of your Bible Background.

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 6:27-31. When you've finished, lead students in a brief discussion **Ask something like:**

- **Someone summarize in your own words what Jesus is saying here.**
- **You're sort of experts on forgiveness now. What do you think the relationship is between these verses and the concept of forgiveness? Where do you see some similarities?**
Answers will vary. Lead students to see that these verses seem to capture the heart of a forgiving person. These verse don't say, "Hate your enemies, they deserve it." Or, "If someone strikes you on the cheek, punch him in the nose." These are examples of being merciful, even if they are not specifically talking about forgiveness.
- **Verse 31 is sometimes called the Golden Rule. If this rule were lived out, what impact would this have on our need to forgive others?**
Answer: We wouldn't have to!!! No one would wrong us, therefore no one would need forgiving.
- **In your opinion, why are these commands of Christ so hard to live by?**
Answers will vary.

THEN, read or have a student read verses 32-36. Once you've finished, **ask something like:**

- **Look back at verses 32-34. What is Jesus trying to help His audience see here?**
Answer: That the easy way isn't enough. Loving nice people is easy. Giving to people who will give you back plus some is easy. It doesn't take a person with a transformed heart to do these things. But to love someone who hates you? If you give without expecting anything in return? Now that's radical. That's evidence of someone with a Christ-like heart.
- **Verse 35 and 36 really get us to the heart of this lesson. In verse 35, Jesus makes a connection between God and us. Where do you see this?**
Answer: God is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. If we act in kind, we are like God in this way. More than that, we are acting as the "sons" that we are.

- **Verse 36 is what we came here to read. In fact, we could probably sum up the last three lessons worth of teaching in this one verse. How does this verse act as such a powerful summary on what we've learned so far about forgiveness?**

Answer: If we would only imitate God's mercy, we would find ourselves endlessly forgiving all those who wrong us.

NEXT, remind students of your opening activity. **Ask:**

- **We talked about inheriting traits from our parents and grandparents. What word does Jesus use in verse 36 that opens the door for this comparison to be made?**

Answer: Jesus says that God is our Father.

- **If God is our Father, what does that make us?**

Answer: His children.

- **And as His children, what does that mean for the way we are to live our lives in the world around us?**

Answers will vary. Help your students see that as children of God, we carry the family name. We have God's "DNA," so to speak (not literally, but it's a good image!).

- **How do your actions impact your earthly parents, both good and bad?**

Answers will vary.

- **Can you make a connection to how your actions impact your heavenly Father and His Kingdom?**

Answers will vary.

FINALLY, direct students' attention to verse 37. **Then ask:**

- **How is this a really fitting summary of our time studying forgiveness? How does this verse work to kind of put a bow on all we've learned?**

Answer: It speaks to how we are to live as agents of God's mercy, compassion, and forgiveness to the world around us. It's a nice send off for the time you've spent studying Jesus and Forgiveness.

Remind students that this really is what they are called to do. **Say something like:**

- **You are part of God's plan to see His Kingdom advance and grow throughout the earth. By living your life as a child of God, emulating your Father in all you do, you show the world that God loves them and makes a tremendous difference in their lives. Showing forgiveness is one of the most powerful ways you can do this. But today's passage speaks to much more of a lifestyle of mercy and grace. Your challenge is to flavor all your interactions with godliness and to do so in a way that shows the world Christ in you.**

Make sure no one has any questions, then move to wrap up the lesson with the **Last Word**.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students embrace a life that seeks to show love, kindness, and forgiveness to all people, especially those who are most undeserving of it.
- **Set-Up:** A glass of water.

FIRST, ask students if they can name one thing that has stood out from the last four lessons, something that has made an impact on their lives. Allow them a moment to share, if they choose.

NEXT, point out the glass of water. **Say something similar to the following:**

- **What do we know about water? We know that it has some inherent properties, right? First, water is wet. Sounds obvious, but it is. Water's basic nature is wetness. It defines what water is. Of course water can also be a liquid and a gas. These are aspects of water that are true to its identity. Water is useful too. It can clean, quench your thirst, cool you off, even put out a fire. When we see water, we know it for what it is. No surprises (well, outside of a water balloon). Water is just, well, water.**

THEN, make the point that you're not teaching a science class and you're not really obsessed with water. Explain that you brought up the glass of water because you wanted to get students thinking about the essential nature of the identity of water. Make the point that just as water has a definite identity, one that we can easily recognize, one that we know the ins and outs of, so do we.

Say something like this:

- **As Christ-followers, you have an identity too. You have an essential nature that is to be recognizable to others. When people see a glass of water, they know what to expect. When people see you, they should know what to expect too. They should see someone who is kind, compassionate, and merciful. Someone who extends grace over and over again. Someone who is confident in his or her identity as a child of God. No surprises. Nothing out of character. This is your challenge.**

FINALLY, if you want, have a little fun. Encourage students to think of this analogy each time they drink a sip of water this week, and let it challenge them to embrace their identity as a child of God.

If no one has any questions or observations, close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

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