

The Unforgiving Servant

Matthew 18:21-22

One day Peter came and asked Jesus, "Lord, how often should I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Should I forgive him seven times?"

Jesus said to Peter: Not seven times, but 70 times seven times.

We all make mistakes. We are not perfect. It is easy to make mistakes, but is forgiving others easy? Not always. Sometimes our feelings are hurt or we have been hurt physically by another. Some swear never to forgive someone and this anger that they have can grow and can hurt us from the peace and happiness forgiveness can bring. When we do something wrong, you are ashamed or angry with yourself. That is how another person feels when they do something wrong too. Should we jump on this person and humiliate him or her with shaming words after he or she has made a mistake? Or would you speak kindly and offer some encouragement?

God wants us to tell him we are sorry when we do something wrong. How does it make you feel to know that God will forgive you when you say you are sorry and really mean it? (Good. I am glad that he will forgive me.) When should we tell God that we are sorry? (When we do something wrong.) God forgives the wrong things we have done, what should we do to others who have done something wrong? (Forgive them.)

Who does God want us to be kind to? (Everyone) When someone says they are sorry and they really mean it, what should you say? (I forgive you.) How many times must we forgive someone? (We should forgive over and over again just like God and Jesus.)

Preparations: Print out "I'm Sorry" Game Cards in white card stock. Print "70 x 7" Game Cards in light yellow card stock. ***Use only the cards that are age appropriate.**

Directions: Put the Game Cards in 2 small baskets and set near the game board. Place your markers on START. Roll the die and move that many spaces. Follow the directions on the space you land on. If the space has "I'm Sorry!" on it, draw the corresponding card and read it out loud (if they cannot read it, have someone else read it for them). On the card is a situation that someone has done something wrong. The player must then apologize to the person to his/her left for the situation on the card and they must be specific with their apology. They must say something like, "I'm sorry I took your video game," instead of "I'm sorry." The player that they apologized to must then say, "I forgive you." Teaching children to apologize and to seek forgiveness from family and friends will encourage them to do so with God. (If needed, the teacher will help the students understand what to do and coach them how to do it correctly.) The player then must also say what they should do to correct their mistake and/or what consequences should happen to them so they will learn to take responsibility of their actions. If you land on a space that has "70 x 7" on it, the player to your right draws a corresponding

Game Card and asks you a question. On the Game Card is a question about “The Unforgiving Servant” and about forgiving. If you answer the question correctly you receive a token. The player who reaches FINISH and has the most tokens wins the game.

*As you play the game, take advantage of natural opportunities to highlight behaviors that facilitate or impeded being sorry for the wrong things you have done and forgiving others. Discuss with the students why someone would be sorry for what they have done and why it is important to forgive others. You could also ask, “What do you think of Steve’s answer?” or “What else could you say or do?” or “What is the worse thing someone could say or do in this situation?” or “What other things could the person do to correct their mistake and what could some of the consequences be?” You can also have the students relate each situation to a commandment to understand that it is a sin. When appropriate, reinforce a variety of ways to say or do things properly.

Continue game as time permits or until the student’s attention wanes.

NOTE: While playing this game be sure to respect individual differences and preferences for some answers.

For younger students, give the children stickers for trying or doing well.