

Lord's Prayer Lesson #8 – Forgive Our Sins

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Tara Tegard

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This free Bible lesson is part 8 of 10 in our Lord's Prayer study. God wants his people to know they are forgiven and freely grant forgiveness to other people. This lesson brings those themes out in ways that children will relate to their daily lives.

You can find the other lessons in the 10 part Bible study by [clicking here](#).

Main idea: We forgive other people for the things they do that hurt us because God forgives us when we sin.

Teacher preparation:

- Read Scripture references, 1 John 1:5-10, Ephesians 1:7 and Psalm 51.
- Gather: Bible, dry erase markers or chart paper and markers; hacky sack, balloons, ping pong balls and cups, (or other small toys. See game for more information); small chalkboards or dry erase boards, chalk or dry erase markers, (one board and piece of chalk or marker per child. See craft for more information); paint and brushes, permanent markers, stickers.
- Write “and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.” (Matthew 6:12, NLT) on a regular sheet of paper. Make sure it takes up the whole page, so it can easily be read. Fold it up and place it in an envelope.
- Take time to meditate on this week's Scripture and think about your own life. We never think about God's forgiveness as being conditional. Matthew 6:14 makes it clear that in order to receive forgiveness for our own wrongdoing, we must forgive others. I struggle with that. It's so much easier to just ignore them, to drive a wedge in my relationships with others just to “keep the peace.” But this is not God's desire. He desires right fellowship among his people. In order for this to happen, we must forgive those who hurt us, even if they never apologize or realize their wrongdoing. Think about your own relationships. Is there someone you need to forgive? Take time to pray to God and forgive them in your own heart.

Scripture references:

- Matthew 6:9-12, 14
- Romans 3:23
- John 3:16
- 1 John 1:9
- Matthew 18:21-35

Game:

How Many? The purpose of this game is to help demonstrate how much seventy times seven is. Ask the kids, “how many jumping jacks can you do?” Have them answer. “Does anyone think they can do 490 jumping jacks?” Do jumping jacks together, counting how many you do. Do other challenges as well, such as “How many times can you



kick a hacky sack in the air without it touching the ground? How many times can you tap a balloon with your hands to keep it in the air? How many times in a row can you land a ping pong ball in a cup?" Continue with the challenges for about ten minutes, or until the kids have most of their wiggles out. Sit them down for the message.

Message:

Open in prayer, then say,

Today we are learning a very important part of the Lord's Prayer. Before we find out what it is, let's repeat all the parts of the Lord's Prayer we have memorized so far. "Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need." Great job memorizing, everyone! Now let's open the special letter from God. (Either open and read the note yourself, or have a student do so.) It says, "and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us." There are two parts of this petition, or special request to God. The first one is "forgive us our sins." We must confess our sins to God. Sins are the wrong things we do, say, and even think. It can sometimes be easy for us to say, "Well I'm a pretty good person, maybe I don't have any sins I need to confess." The Bible is clear on this. In Romans 3:23 it says, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." The real problem with this is that since we have sinned, we cannot be with God. God is perfectly perfect, and he cannot be around sin and wrongdoing. Instead of being with Jesus in heaven for all of forever, if we live our whole lives ignoring God and continue to do sinful things that hurt him, we will have to spend all of forever in hell, away from God. What are we to do then? Can we just stop sinning and then be okay with God? Nope. Even if we really wanted to, we can never stop sinning and make things okay with God. We all need help. Thankfully, God loves us so much that he sent his one and only son, Jesus, to die for us! Whoever believes in Jesus will get to spend eternity in heaven! (John 3:16). Let's have a sword drill to show us how we can be cleaned of all our sins. Remove all bookmarks from your Bible and hold it above your head. When I say go, look up 1 John 1:9. Go! (Have a student read the verse.) "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." So all we have to do to be right with God to tell him our sins and ask that he would forgive us for doing wrong, and he will forgive us. That is great news! There is one more part to this petition. The first part says, "forgive us our sins." We just found out that he does! The second part is a bit trickier. It says, "as we have forgiven those who sin against us." This is an easy statement to say without thinking much about it. In fact, this is the only part of the Lord's Prayer that Jesus explains a little more after sharing the prayer. In Matthew 6:14, Jesus 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." Uh oh. Now that seems tough. It does sound tough, but that is because it matters so much to God. If we expect God to forgive us for the wrong things we do that hurt him, it is only right for us to forgive the wrong things that other people do that hurt us.

Get nice and cozy, because it's story time! I am going to share with you a parable, or a story, that Jesus told about forgiveness. (Read Matthew 18:21-35 with good expression.)

Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven! "Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. "But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. "But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. "His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it,' he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. "When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that

tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. "That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart."

You see, forgiveness is a big deal to God. If we are hurt by someone, it is easy to just ignore them or be angry. Neither of these options make God happy. God wants all of his children to get along. When we choose to ignore or be angry with someone instead of forgiving them, we are not getting along with them like God wants us to. At the beginning of this story, when Peter asked how many times he ought to forgive the person who sins against him, he thought seven times would be a whole lot, but Jesus had a different amount in mind. Jesus said we must forgive those who sin against us 70 times 7 times! If you do the math, that equals 490 times! Remember that game we played? Was it possible for anyone to do any of those challenges 490 times? Doing anything 490 times seems impossible. That is what Jesus is getting at here. He does not want us to keep a notebook and put tally marks in it every time we forgive someone. (Demonstrate this by putting tally marks on the board as you make the following comments.) My little brother blamed me for something I didn't do. I'll forgive him. Tally mark. He broke my favorite toy. Tally mark. He read my diary. Tally mark. He licked all the cookies so I can't eat any. Tally mark. Doesn't that seem silly? For one thing, I sure don't want to count all those tally marks. For another, Jesus does not want us to keep track of all the sins people commit against us. He says seventy times seven as a way to demonstrate that we have to keep forgiving people for their sins against us, all the time, no matter what. On our own, that would be impossible, but we have God helping us! Nothing is impossible with God! Even when it is hard to forgive, we can remember that Jesus DIED so we could be forgiven of the many, many sins we commit against him, and he does not keep track of all the things we do wrong. That helps make it easier to forgive, doesn't it?

One last important thing before we end in prayer. It is important to forgive everyone, no matter what mean things they say or do. This does NOT mean we have to stay in situations where people keep hurting us. If a friend continues to be mean, you do not have to spend time with them. Continue to pray that they would repent to God and turn away from their sins, but you do not have to let yourself continue to be hurt. This is especially important if someone is physically hurting you or bullying you in any way. If someone is hurting you or making you uncomfortable, TELL A GROWN UP YOU TRUST. If you want, you can talk to me, pastor, or your parents. We all love you very much and want to protect you from getting hurt. Let us know if there is any way we can help you in an unsafe, uncomfortable, or scary situation.

Today when we close in prayer, I want each of you to think about three things. (Write these on the board.) Think about your own sins to God, and confess them, think about any ways you may have hurt someone recently, and confess that, and lastly, think of a way someone may have hurt you recently. Ask God for the strength to forgive them in your heart. Remember, people may not always say they are sorry. When you forgive, it is not because they feel sorry, but because God told you to forgive them, even if they are never sorry. You do not have to tell them they are forgiven if they do not say sorry, but you need to tell God in your heart that you forgive them. This will help you be kind to these people and continue to get along with them. Now, let's pray that God will forgive our sins and help us to forgive others for the ways they have sinned against us.

End in prayer.

Craft: Chalkboards/ dry erase boards. There are so many ways you can do this craft, so choose the option that best suits your budget and your kids. Chalkboards can be purchased for about a dollar a piece at craft stores or online. Be sure to get the kind with an unfinished border for kids to paint. You could also purchase small clipboards and paint them with chalkboard paint. (Practically any surface can be painted with chalkboard paint. For best results, prime the surface with black primer. After applying a few coats of chalkboard paint, rub a piece of chalk all along the surface. This will help the boards erase better in the future.) If you want to make dry erase boards, place white contact paper (sticky shelf liner) over a clip board or other hard surface. Kids can use acrylic paint, stickers or permanent markers to decorate the border of these. The whole point of this craft is to give the kids a surface they can scribble on and dirty up, then wipe completely clean, just like Jesus completely wipes us clean of our sins. Any

hurt that any person tries to mark us with, can be wiped away by us when we forgive. Don't forget to give kids chalk or a marker to go along with their boards! Tissues clean these perfectly well, or you could give each kid a piece of felt or soft cloth to keep as an eraser.

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