

Lower Elementary

WEEK 3 - STARTER



Activity Name: This or That

What You Need:

- ☐ “This or That” card set

What You Do:

- Shuffle both sets of the “This or That” Activity Page cards.
- Lay all of the cards face down in a grid pattern (4 x 6).
- Gather the kids around the grid. Play Together:
- Say, “We’re going to play a game called ‘Memory!’ The goal is for you to find the matching cards.”
- Allow the kids to take turns flipping over two cards to try and find a match.
- If a match is found: That kid gets to keep the pair in front of them and flip two more cards.
- If no match is found: That kid is to flip the cards back over, and it’s the next kid’s turn.
- Encourage everyone to watch closely and try to remember where the cards are.
- Continue playing until all matches have been found!

What You Say:

Awesome job, everyone! You really had to focus and pay attention to which cards had already been flipped to find the best match. That reminds me that sometimes we have to make sure we’re focusing on the right things in life if we want to make wise choices. In our Bible Story today, we’re going to discover who we should focus on when it comes to growing in wisdom. Let’s go find out more. Come with me!

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



Bible Story: The Servant Who Had No Mercy • *Matthew 18:21-35*

Bottom Line: God's kingdom grows when you forgive.

Monthly Memory Verse: *God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit.* • Romans 14:17 NIV

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why did Jesus tell a story about a king and his helpers?
- How many times should we forgive people? (A lot!)
- Why does God forgive us?
- Why can forgiving others be hard?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- Is there someone you need to forgive?

Activity Name: Counting Forgiveness

What You Need: ☐ Bean bag

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to stand or sit with you in a circle.
- Start tossing the ball back and forth between you and the kids.
- Each time the ball is caught, count one number higher. “One!” “Two!” “Three!”
- When you get to the number ten, stop the game.
- Say: “Okay, we counted to ten. Should we stop forgiving people after they’ve made ten bad choices?” (*No!*)
- Start the game again, but this time, try to count as high as you can before someone drops the ball.
- Keep it fun, and celebrate how high you can count.

What You Say:

God is like the good king in the story who completely forgave the huge amount of money. When we trust that Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and choose to follow Him, God wipes out our sin debt. We were completely tied up in our sin ... but now, we’re free! It’s incredible. Because God has forgiven us of such a giant sin debt, He wants us to pass that forgiveness on to the people around us. Like Jesus told Peter, we can continue to forgive without putting limits on it.

Forgiving someone doesn’t mean what they did was okay or you should let them keep doing it. It doesn’t even mean you have to keep being friends with them. If someone hurts you or makes you uncomfortable, tell a grown-up you trust!

Forgiving someone says that you’re trusting God to make things right. And when you forgive, it frees *you* from staying angry and becoming hard and bitter. Forgiveness isn’t a feeling, it’s a choice. And when you ask God for help and choose to forgive, you are showing your world God’s good heart of forgiveness. And God will do great kingdom things when you choose to forgive. **[Bottom Line] God’s kingdom grows when you forgive.**

Close in prayer/Invite kids to pray as well.