



I Spy

The Unforgiving Servant

BIG IDEA: Jesus wants me to forgive.

BIBLE BASIS: Matthew 18:21-35

KEY VERSE: “Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you.”
Colossians 3:13 (NirV)

SCHEDULE

2S & 3S CLASSES

ARRIVAL & PLAYTIME

10:30-10:55

2S & 3S LARGE GROUP

10:55-11:10

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

11:10-12:00

PRE-K & K CLASSES

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

10:30-11:15

PRE-K & KINDER LARGE GROUP

11:15-11:40

REVIEW ACTIVITIES

11:40-12:00

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7.3 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



LEADER DEVOTIONAL

I am always amazed (and a little baffled) when I hear “forgiveness stories.” You know — the stories of unbelievable forgiveness that one person extends to another. The victim of a heinous crime who forgives the criminal, the abused who forgives the abuser. These stories are, to me, the greatest witness of the Christian faith. How else could we truly forgive if not from Christ’s presence in our lives?

Our verse for this weekend comes from Colossians 3:13: “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

If you’re anything like me, you find that while forgiveness is one of the most powerful testimonies of our faith, it is also one of the hardest to put into practice. Let’s try to grow in our forgiveness together this week. Sometime today, think of one person you have a hard time forgiving. Plug that person’s name into our verse and let it be your prayer this week.

“Lord, help me forgive _____ as You forgave me.”

Rebecca Crews
GO! Team Member



LARGE GROUP SKILL BUILDING

How to Prepare Like a Champ for Large Group

Here's a short story for you: A man gets up in front of a room full of kids and, with no forethought or preparation, he delivers a spellbinding and life-changing message. The kids are so grateful that they carry the man out of the room on their shoulders as confetti cannons explode. Great story, right? Unfortunately, you'll find it under "fiction." Great messages don't just happen without a little work on the part of the communicator. In short, your goal as the Large Group Leader is to communicate God's truth to kids in an engaging way so that life change can happen. To do that effectively, though, you've got to do a little prep work. Here are a few ways you can prepare:

Live the message. Authenticity is one of the most important traits of a good communicator. When we tell kids that they need to be pursuing God, they need to know we're doing that ourselves. That doesn't mean you have to be perfect; it just means that you have to be working towards living out the message in your own life.

Memorize. Sounds scary, right? It doesn't have to be. We'll spend more time in the future talking about how to memorize, but for now let's just say this: Effective communicators memorize. When you're tied to a script, you lose eye contact and your body becomes less animated. And when that happens, your level of engagement goes down. If you've never memorized before, start small. Pick a section of the lesson to memorize and pay attention to the difference it makes with your audience.

Rehearse. In short, don't let service time be the first time you've ever delivered your message. It might seem awkward at first, but run through your message a few times in advance. If possible, do it in the actual space where you'll be teaching.

Pray. When we deliver God's message, we're not alone. Ask for the Holy Spirit to be your co-teacher!

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UNIT DESCRIPTION

I spy with my little eye — I spy down low, and I spy up high! During “I Spy,” preschoolers will need to put on their looking eyes to look high and low for the hidden objects. Once found, each object will help tell a portion of the Bible story. It’s an eye-opening experience that teaches kids to follow and obey Jesus, our all-powerful Savior.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Draw and color a picture that a child might give to their mom. For example, it might be a stick figure drawing of a mom with hearts around it and the words “I love you” written in child-like print. Place the picture with a marker in the storytelling area.
- Print the large and small dollar signs on cardstock paper, then cut them out. Attach the large dollar sign to a large bag or pillowcase. Attach the small dollar sign to a small bag or pillowcase.
- Place the following items somewhere in the preschool room:
 - King’s crown
 - Large bag with dollar sign on it
 - Small bag with dollar sign on it
 - Two sets of handcuffs or chains
- Create a “Super Duper Bible Box” and place your storytelling Bible inside. This box will be used every week. See the Resource Folder for details on how to make the “Super Duper Bible Box.”
- If using the non-video options for the Topher segments of the lesson, print the Topher’s Storytime Rules signs and Topher’s Big Idea signs on 8½” x 11” cardstock paper and place in the story time area. See “Getting Started” in the Resource Folder for the printable signs and for more instructions on how to perform the non-video options.
- Note: Any media repeated throughout the unit, such as the Topher videos and the title slide, is located in the Lesson 1 Resource Folder only.

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★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

WELCOME AND MUSIC

Music: Play one or two upbeat worship songs

BIG IDEA AND BIBLE VERSE

Large Group Leader: Hello, my friends! I spy with my little eye...some kids with quiet mouths. Do you have a quiet mouth? (*Children get quiet.*) I spy with my little eye...some kids with folded hands. Do you have folded hands? (*Children fold hands.*) Great job! It looks like you're all ready for today's Bible story.

Say: Today's true Bible story is going to teach us that **Jesus wants me to forgive**. That's our Big Idea for the day. Let's say it together. (*Repeat Big Idea with children.*) **Jesus wants me to forgive**. It's true! **Jesus wants me to forgive**. In fact, that's what our memory verse from the Bible tells us. Let me teach it to you.

*“With people (point to all the children),
this is impossible (two thumbs down and shake head “no”).
But with God (point up),
all things are possible (two thumbs up and shake head “yes”).”
Matthew 19:26 (extend hands like you're holding a book).*

Say: Let's do that together. (*Repeat memory verse with children two or three times.*)

2s & 3s - STORY TIME RULES

Say: Wow — nice job! I think you are ready for the Bible story. Before we get started, though, I think we should go over our three story time rules.

Video: Play “Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules” video

(Note: Play the “Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules” video or use the Story Time Rules script found in the Resource Folder.)

Pre-K & K - Bible Trivia

- Who Wrote the book of Matthew? (Matthew)
- Who wrote the book of Mark? (Mark)
- Who wrote the book of Luke? (Luke)
- Who wrote the book of John? (John)
- Who wrote the book of Acts? (Luke)
- Who wrote the book of Romans? (Paul)
- The Bible is split into two parts. What are they called? (The Old & New Testament)
- What is the difference? (Jesus was born in the New Testament)

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ISPY INTRO

Say: I want you to imagine something with me. Imagine you drew a picture for your mom. *(Show the colored drawing.)* You spent a lot of time drawing it, and coloring it, and making it really, really pretty. But before you could give it to your mom, your little brother got ahold of it. Then he took a marker and scribbled all over the drawing. *(Take a marker and scribble all over the drawing. Show picture to children again.)* Can you show me what your face would look like when you saw what your brother did? *(Children make a face.)* That's what my face would look like too!

Say: Now imagine that your little brother felt bad about what he did and said to you, "I'm sorry." What do you think you should do? Should you stay mad at your brother, or should you forgive him? *(Children respond.)* That's right! Let's count to three and say, "I forgive you." *(Count to three and say together.)* In today's true Bible story, we're going to learn all about forgiveness.

Say: If you're ready to hear that story, wiggle your fingers in the air. *(Children wiggle fingers in the air.)* Great! First, let's get our Bible out of the Super Duper Bible Box. *(Move to the Super Duper Bible Box.)* I need your help getting the Bible out, though. We need to say our special Bible words together. Repeat these special words after me: It's true, it's true, the Bible is true!

Slide: Show the "The Unforgiving Servant" slide

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BIG BIBLE STORY — THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

(Ahead of time, place the story objects around the room. Make sure they are visible from the seating area. When it's time to spy an object, give clues such as color, shape, and what it's used for. Retrieve the object once it has been spied by the children.)

Say: Let's play "I Spy." I spy with my little eye something... **(Give clues about the crown.)** In the Bible, Jesus told a story about a king. He said, "Once upon a time, there was a king who had many servants." *(Choose a child to play the role of the king. Invite them to the storytelling area and put the crown on them.)*

Say: Are you ready for another "I Spy?" *(Children respond.)* I spy with my little eye something... **(Give clues about the large bag with a dollar sign.)** One of the king's servants owed the king LOTS and LOTS of money. *(Choose a child to play the role of the first servant and hand them the large money bag.)* The king told the servant, "Pay me back my money!" *(Prompt king to repeat line.)* The servant was so sad. He didn't have any money to give the king. *(Help first servant turn bag over to show it's empty.)* The servant fell to his knees and said, "Give me more time. I'll pay you back." *(Prompt servant to get on knees and repeat line.)* The king felt sorry for the servant. He forgave the servant and let him go without paying any money. *(Take money bag and throw it aside, then have the servant stand up again.)*

Say: Let's do another "I Spy." I spy with my little eye something... **(Give clues about the small bag with a dollar sign.)** The servant who was forgiven went out and found another servant that owed *him* a very small amount of money. *(Choose a child to play the role of the second servant and hand them the small money bag.)* The first servant grabbed the second servant and shouted, "Pay me back my money!" *(Prompt first servant to repeat line.)* The second servant was so sad. He didn't have any money to give the first servant. *(Help second servant turn bag over to show it's empty.)* The second servant fell to his knees and said, "Give me more time. I'll pay you back." *(Prompt servant to get on knees and repeat line.)* But the first servant said, "No! I DON'T forgive you!"

Say: I spy with my little eye something... **(Give clues about handcuffs or chains.)** Instead, the first servant had the second servant put in jail. *(Put first pair of handcuffs or chains on second servant's hands and lead them away.)* When the king found out what the first servant did, he was very mad. He said to the first servant, "I forgave you, but you didn't forgive the other servant." Then the king had the first servant put in jail too. *(Put second pair of handcuffs or chains on the first servant's hands and lead them away.)* The first servant had to stay in jail until he could pay all of the money back.

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MUSIC AND CLOSING

(Encourage the children to stand up. Lead them in a worship song of your choice. Following the song, use the rhyme from earlier to help the children sit down again.)

Music: Play one worship song

Say: In the story that Jesus told, the king said, “I forgive you” to the first servant, but the first servant said, “I DON’T forgive you!” to the second servant. Which of those do you think Jesus wants *us* to say? *(Children respond.)* That’s right. Sometimes people do mean things to us that we don’t like. When that happens, Jesus wants us to say, “I forgive you.” When we forgive someone, it means we stop being mad at them and we don’t do mean things back.

Say: That’s kind of hard to do sometimes, so let’s stand up and practice. *(Children stand.)* Each time I point to you, I want you to hug a different friend and say, “I forgive you.” What do you say when someone scribbles on your drawing? *(Point to children. Prompt them to hug, then together say, “I forgive you.”)* What do you say when someone breaks your toy? *(Point to children.)* What do you say when someone says something mean to you? *(Point to children.)* What do you say when someone eats your cookie? *(Point to children.)* Great job! *(Have children take a seat.)*

Say: You see, God is like the king in the story. When we sin or do bad things, God says, “I forgive you.” And because God forgives *us*, **Jesus wants us to forgive others.**

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TOPHER'S BIG IDEA

Say: Hey — that's our Big Idea for today! I think we should tell it to our parents when we see them. Maybe we should practice first. (*Appear to be thinking.*) Hmm...who could we practice telling? I know! We could tell our friend, Topher the Gopher. Let's see if we can find him.

Video: Play "Topher's Big Idea Video "

(Whisper.) Uh-oh. It looks like Topher is asleep. I think we should wake him up. When he wakes up, we can all tell him that **Jesus wants me to forgive**. On the count of three, let's all yell, "Topher the Gopher, wake up, wake up!" (*Count to three and yell with kids. Then play "Topher's Big Idea Video 2" or hold up card #2.*)

Topher: Hey, what's the Big Idea?

Children and Large Group Leader: **Jesus wants me to forgive.** (*Repeat the Big Idea several times. When finished, play "Topher's Big Idea Video 3" or hold up card #3.*)

Topher: Wow! That is a Big Idea! Thanks for telling me! Goodbye, kids. (*Encourage kids to wave goodbye to Topher as he disappears back into his hole.*)

Large Group Leader: Let's say a prayer together and ask God to help us forgive. (*Encourage kids to repeat the following prayer after you.*)

**Dear God,
You love me so, so much.
And You are so kind.
Thank You for forgiving me.
Please help me forgive others.
Amen.**