

The Rock, Sunday 30th August 2020

Forgiveness

Warm up

Dance to, join in with the actions and sing our Rock song.

This video has the words:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcAG4PbNXaA>

This video has the actions: <https://youtu.be/8dbOgbRxC1M>



Getting started

You are going to run through some scenarios and the question is, could you still be friends after this...?

It's up to you how the children indicate their responses to the question. You can either get the children to run to one side of the room for 'yes, they could be friends', or the other side for 'no, they couldn't', or you could do thumbs up and thumbs down, or stand and sit.

Could you still be friends with someone...

...if they sat in your chair at school?

...if they went off with someone else?

...if they wouldn't let you play their game at lunchtime?

...if they laughed at your ideas?

...if they were better at football than you are?

...if they had punched you on purpose?

...if they had broken one of your toys?

...if they said nasty things about you?

...if they told a lie about you to the teacher?

...if they took your coat home by mistake?

(Feel free to add your own ideas)



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The Point: To introduce the idea of forgiving/still being friends.

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Story/ teaching time

Pause after each paragraph of the story to let the children act it out - don't leave too long.

This story is that of the unmerciful servant found in Matthew 18 (this is the Urban Saints Bible version):

One day a king decided to call in his servants and ask them to give an account of what they owed him. As he was doing this, one servant was brought in who owed him fifty million silver coins. But he didn't have any money to pay what he owed. The king ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all he owned, in order to pay the debt.

The servant got down on his knees and began begging, "Have pity on me, and I will pay you every penny I owe!" The king felt sorry for him and let him go free. He even told him that he did not have to pay back the money.

As the servant was leaving, he happened to meet another servant, who owed him a hundred silver coins. So he grabbed the man by the throat. He started choking him and said, "Pay me what you owe!"

The man got down on his knees and began begging, "Have pity on me, and I will pay you back." But the first servant refused to have pity. Instead, he went and had the other official put in jail until he could pay what he owed.



When some other servants found out what had happened, they felt sorry for the man who had been put in jail. Then they told the king what had happened. The king called the first official back in and said, "You're an evil man! When you begged for mercy, I said you did not have to pay back a penny. Don't you think you should show pity to someone else, as I did to you?" The king was so angry that he ordered the servant to be tortured until he could pay back everything he owed.

After the story, ask what they thought about the first servant. Did he act fairly? Did the King act fairly?

Say that Jesus told this story to show us what God is like. In the story, the King represents God and we are the first servant. Ask if anyone has ever done anything wrong. Of course - everyone has. Say that when we do things wrong we make God sad and we need to make up for it - it's a bit like the first servant owing money. The problem is we can't ever make amends for the wrong things we do because we're not perfect and so we keep making mistakes. God knows this so He decides that we don't have

to make amends - He forgives us (when we ask Him to) and says that we don't owe anything.

The problem is that we don't always treat other people that way - we want them to make it up to us every time they do something that upsets us. This story is telling us that we need to forgive other people just like God forgives us.

Is that an easy or hard thing to do? How does it feel to know that God forgives us when we ask?

Bring out the point that when God forgives us (even though we deserve punishment), he's showing us something called mercy and that is better than getting what we deserve. Say that if we choose to have mercy on people when they do wrong things to us, then we won't get the punishment we deserve for doing wrong things to God - he will have mercy on us. Say that the Bible says we need to forgive others if we want to be forgiven ourselves.

The Point: To show that God is all about forgiveness and we need to be too!

Craft and activity ideas

1. Equipment

Paper, wax crayons (preferably metallic), coins, pencils.



Ask the children what the servant in the story was forgiven for. He owed some money (quite a lot) but the King said he didn't have to pay it back. Say that we've done lots of things that we need God to forgive us for.

Show the children how to put a coin under their paper and rub the crayon over the top so that the details of the coin show up on their paper. They can do this with lots of coins and then write on the picture, "God says I owe nothing!" Make sure the

children really understand the concept of what owing is.

The Point: A story reminder.

2. Equipment

Card, envelopes, coloured pens/pencils, odds and ends to stick on (stickers, gems, foam shapes, etc.).

Remind the children that we need to forgive and be forgiven. It's important that we say sorry for the wrong things we've done to one another and to God.

Let the children make a card to say sorry to someone. If there's nothing they need to be sorry for (!!!), they can make a card for God.

The Point: To make sure we've said sorry to those we need to get right with.

3. Equipment

Paper, shapes cut out of felt or coloured paper: a smallish circle, a larger oval with a flat base and two narrowish rectangles for each child. They should all be different colours. Glue.

Mercy makes me think of hugs – after someone has been merciful, you want to hug them to say thank you. This is a hug picture.

Children should stick the largish oval with the straight edge pointing down on their paper. This is a body (top half). The circle should go on top to be the head.

Now stick the rectangles over the torso in a cross shape – this is someone else giving that person a hug.

Children can draw a background if they like.

The Point: A reminder craft.

Prayer

Equipment

Paper, pens, paper shredder or bin.

The children may have been reminded in this session of things that they need to ask God to forgive them for. Give them an opportunity now to write down or draw those things and to talk quietly to God, saying sorry and asking for forgiveness.

When they are ready, they can bring their pieces of paper to the shredder (or rip them to shreds and throw in the bin) to have them destroyed as a symbol of God forgiving them.

The Point: To make space for some response.



THE ROCK

(Material taken from Energize by Urban Saints - <https://www.energize.uk.net/>)

