

## CITY SG – July 18<sup>th</sup>- 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**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

### PRE- SERVICE ACTIVITY

**What You Need:** Nothing

**What You Do:**

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Encourage kids to select a partner.
- Partners will stand, facing each other, with their hands behind their backs.
- Say: "On your marks, get set, SHOW!"
  - On "SHOW!" each kid is to hold up one to five fingers on one hand.
  - The other hand is to remain behind their back.
- Pairs will add up the two hands (one from each player). If the total for both is seven, that pair is out and must sit down.
  - For example: If one kid holds up three fingers and their partner holds up four fingers for a total of seven, the pair is out.
- Repeat with remaining pairs, calling out: "Ready, Set, SHOW!" for each round, as time and interest allow.

**Say:** "What number were you trying to avoid? (*Pause for responses.*) Yes! The number seven. Pay close attention to our Bible Story today to find out why seven is the wrong answer."

### SMALL GROUP TIME

#### **1. You Break It, I Fix It**

*Bible Story Review*

**What You Need:** Bible, Jenga® or wooden blocks

**What You Do:**

*During the Activity:*

- Open your Bible to Matthew 18:21-35, and show the kids where the Bible Story is.
- Review the story with the kids. Share these main points:
  - Peter asked Jesus how many times he needed to forgive someone. Peter asked if the number was seven. Jesus said the amount was so much more than that.
  - Then, Jesus told a story to share how God's kingdom works.
  - In the story, a king decided to get everyone who owed him debts to pay him.
  - One servant had a huge debt and begged and begged the king for time to pay.

- Instead of making the servant pay back the humongous debt, the king forgave it! Completely!
- But that same servant had someone who owed him a little debt.
- Instead of forgiving the person who owed him, like the servant had been forgiven, that servant put the person who owed him in prison and demanded that he pay him his tiny debt.
- The king heard that the servant wouldn't forgive the person who owed him, and the king was so upset. He threw the servant in jail until he could pay his huge debt.
- Jesus said that we should forgive people who hurt us because we have been forgiven of so much.
- Set up the Jenga® blocks for the kids to play the game or encourage them to just stack the blocks to build the highest tower they can.
- When the tower or Jenga® game topples, encourage everyone in the group—EXCEPT for the person who caused the tower to fall—to clean it up and restack the blocks.
- Repeat for another round if time allows.

**Say:** “How does knowing you’ve been forgiven help you forgive others? This week, if you’re tempted to stay angry or you find yourself refusing to forgive, remember rebuilding this tower for someone else. Think about how God fixed our broken relationship with Him by sending Jesus to pay for our sins and choosing to forgive us. Remember, **God’s kingdom grows when you forgive.**”

## 2. Heart of Forgiveness

### *Application Activity*

**What You Need:** Pink paper (one piece per kid), Scissors, tape (1-2 per bin)

#### **What You Do:**

- Fold construction paper in half and cut a half-heart shape.
- Unfold the heart
- Ask the kids to think of times when someone hurt their feelings.
- Have them write or draw a few of those times on their heart.
- Instruct them to gently crumple their paper heart into a ball.
- Say: “This is what it can feel like when someone hurts us. Our hearts feel crumpled and sad.”
- Now, ask them to carefully uncrumple and smooth their heart back out as best as they can.
- Say: “When we forgive, it’s like we are smoothing out our hearts. It might still have some wrinkles, and that’s okay. Forgiving doesn’t mean we forget, but it does mean we choose to let the anger go and let God make our heart whole again.”
- If their heart has a tear, give them a small piece of tape to “repair” it.

**Say:** “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 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.”

### 3. Counting Forgiveness

#### *Application Activity*

**What You Need:** Soft ball or beanbag

**What You Do:**

- Invite the kids to stand 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.

### **AT THE 5- MINUTE CALL:**

#### **PRAY**

- Ask, “Does anyone have any prayer requests or things they want to thank God for from this week? (*Let the kids share their prayer requests and praises*)”
- “Dear God, thank You for being a King who forgives us. Your love is bigger than all our mess-ups. Please help us to be like You and forgive others. Thank You for cleaning our hearts. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”
- Remind the kids that when they leave, their parents should get a text message on their phones telling them what we learned this week. AND they will get a link to an activity they can do at home and bring back for a PRIZE!

**PARENT PICK UP POINT:** As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to say what they learned about forgiveness.