

God's Promises

Part 4

God always forgives.

1 John 1:9; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Luke 7:36-50

To understand that there is no limit on God's forgiveness, he will always forgive us. He will never reject us. Forgiveness is his gift to us.

Worship

Choose from these ideas:

- Use the theme song for this series – “Yes and Amen” by The Housefires
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkHo70DeiMM>
- Draw a cross shape, cut it out and draw or write a message to Jesus on the cross thanking him for dying on the cross for you.
- Make a cross in air dry clay or playdough, use different tools to decorate the cross. Play worship music as you do this and spend time quietly with Jesus talking with him about the things or people you are finding challenging right now. Ask him to help you forgive anyone who has hurt you or upset you.
- Hold a heart shape and ask Jesus “Is there anything I have done to hurt your heart?” Talk with Jesus about these things and say sorry if you need to.

- Worship songs you could use:
 - “The story of the cross” by Rend Co Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1dmm9N-6bl>
 - “This is Amazing Grace.” By Bethel Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxVadCcRfoI>
 - “Jesus loves me.” By Hillsong Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HAFyRQx1k8>

Intro Activity - “God’s promises” bunting

Welcome to our series – God’s promises. God made lots of promises to us in the Bible and today we are going to learn about one of them.

Look up our promise for today, in 1 John 1:9. Read together what it says. The promise in this verse is that God will always forgive us. There is no limit on his forgiveness.

Each session we are creating another section of our bunting illustrating God’s promises to us. We can add the phrase **“God will always forgive me.”** to the next flag of bunting and decorate it.

Explain the promises of God throughout the Bible give us hope. 2 Corinthians 1:20 says *“The yes to all of God’s promises is in Christ. And that is why we say “Amen” through Christ to the glory of God.”* Because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, we can be sure and confident that every promise God has made to us will happen. Like our verse this week said, we can trust him to do what he says, because he always does what is right. He will forgive us.

Object Lesson – Egg explosion

The illustration for today is adapted from <https://meaningfulmama.com/day-345-forgiveness-and-explosion.html>

You will need: Microwave
An egg
Be prepared for a mess!

Instructions:

1. Stick an egg in the microwave and watch for the explosion!
2. Talk about how this is a visual aid of what happens if we have a heart that wants to hold on to things and not forgive, it starts to grow in on itself and leads to explosive anger, resentment and/or sadness. It may not look like anything is happening on the outside, but after a while, it explodes, and it does come out in all kinds of ugliness.

Object Lesson – Egg explosion

The illustration for today is adapted from <https://meaningfulmama.com/day-94-grace-in-jesus-blood-character.html>

You will need: Sheet of red cellophane
White paper and felt tip pens.

(Before you start this activity make sure the colours chosen work with the red cellophane – you need the writing to disappear!)

Instructions:

1. Brainstorm some of the things God has told us not to do. Write these things on to the white paper using the coloured pens selected.
2. Talk about how God sets His rules for a reason – to make our lives and the lives of others better.
3. Talk about Jesus dying for our sins and bring out the cellophane. Lay the cellophane over the sins and see them disappear!
4. Talk about how this is a visual reminder of how God freely forgives our sins through Jesus' death. His forgiveness takes away our sins completely.
5. **We can trust in the promise of God – he will always forgive us because forgiveness is his gift to us.**

Bible story

Remember God's promises are throughout the Bible. God always keeps his promises and today our Bible story illustrates our promise – "God always forgives." Read the story of **Jesus and the woman who anointed him from Luke 7:36-50**.

You could tell the story by having the children act out what the lady does, using a bowl of water and soap, perfume bottle. Or if with younger children you could tell the story and wash their feet like the lady did to Jesus. Make it sensory by having the children smell the soap and the perfume. And make the contrast between clean and dirty.

Another idea is to draw a picture of feet and laminate it or cover it in sticky tape and then colour the feet on the plastic with a dry wipe marker or water-soluble paint to make them look dirty. Wipe off the dirt with a cloth as you tell the story.

Use this simplified retelling of the story:

A lady is sad. She has done lots and lots of naughty things. She feels all dirty on the inside. But she wants to be friends with God. She goes to see Jesus. She loves Jesus and takes him a very special present – some beautiful perfume. The lady cleans Jesus' dirty feet, puts perfume on them, they smell lovely now. "Thank you for cleaning my dirty feet," says Jesus. "I can clean your dirty heart! I can make you friends with God!" The lady isn't sad anymore, she is feeling happy because Jesus cleaned her heart.

Discuss the story: Today we are discovering the amazing promise that God will always forgive us. He will never reject us. When we turn away from our sins and ask Jesus to forgive us – God says he is going to forgive us. He also says he will never reject us. Sometimes people reject us. But God uses words like ALWAYS and NEVER. He promises that he will ALWAYS forgive us and he will NEVER reject us. Sometimes people make a promise and it doesn't work out, they can't keep it because it was too much for them to promise or something happened which stopped them.

But God's promise to always forgive us and never reject us will never fail, they are guaranteed.

In our Bible story there were 2 people and Jesus. First there was the woman who had made a lot of mistakes in her life and know it. She felt so bad over the things she had done wrong, she wanted to put it right, so she came to Jesus. When she washed his feet and used her expensive perfume it was a picture of what she needed Jesus to do for her – make her clean.

Then there was Simon whose house Jesus was at, he watched what was happening and criticised the woman and Jesus, so Jesus told him a story. The story was about Simon and the way he had judged the woman instead of thinking about his own sins. This is the key to the whole story. The woman recognised she needed to be forgiven, Simon did not.

The Bible tells us everyone in the whole world has sinned and needs forgiveness. We all have a sin debt which needs to be forgiven. Jesus is the only one who can forgive, and he promises that he always will. We can either be like the woman recognise we need to be forgiven and come to Jesus in the confidence that he has promised he will always forgive us and never reject us or be like Simon and stay in our sin. Jesus offers us an amazing gift of forgiveness; you just have to receive it and know that he promises he will forgive you.

Activation

- Grab a piece of paper and coloured pens. Spend time quietly with Jesus and receive His forgiveness, write or draw anything Jesus shows you about how he sees you.
- **For younger children** – make the inside of a clear plastic bottle “dirty” with some paint and close the lid. Make the outside dirty too. Provide a washing up bowl of warm soapy water and clean the outside. Talk about how the inside needs to be made clean as well and how Jesus does this for our heart.

- **Make Perfume Bottles** – Either when you are out and about collect petals and leaves from flowers and mush them into your own perfume. Or make a “smelly bottle” – using a plastic bottle which has a sports cap. Put something which smells nice inside: try cotton wool/ cotton balls with a few drops of essential oils or perfume. Decorate the bottle with stickers.
- **Dodge the hose!** – Play a game of dodge the hose outside – where the child has to try to stay dry while you try to get them wet with a hose or water spray and water gun.