

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 4 • Unit 7 • Week 3

THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

OBJECTIVE:

To show through the story of the king and the servant in Matthew 18:21-35 that we must forgive those who are sorry and repent just as God forgives us.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Ask: What's the worst thing that someone has done to you? [Encourage participation.]

Has someone ridiculed you because you are "too smart" or "so dumb"? Has someone made fun of you because you're skinny or heavy, too short or too tall? Have you been ridiculed because of your beliefs? What do you think of those who tease or ridicule you? Do you like them? Probably your answer is "no." Right?

Say: I have two biblical examples that I would like to share with you today that show the attitude we must have towards those who hurt us and what we must always be willing to do.

BIBLE LESSON:

Do: Read or have one of the students read the story about the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35.

Say: The king forgave the first servant for a debt that he owed. Later, that servant passed someone who, in comparison, owed him a very small debt.

Ask: Did he forgive as the king had forgiven him?

Say: No, he put his fellow servant into prison. When the king found out, he was livid—very angry. He called the man who owed him the debt and put him in prison.

- Ask: How much did the servant owe the king?
- Say: The king's servant owed him a lot of money. Ten thousand talents would probably have been talents of silver. Each talent weighed about 91 pounds. And a talent of silver was worth about \$21,000. That means the servant owed the king \$210,000,000!
- Ask: Why was the king compassionate and willing to forgive? [Have one of the students read Matthew 18:26 again].
- Say: The servant wanted to repay his debts, didn't he? And when the king saw his attitude, he had compassion on his servant and forgave the whole \$210,000,000 debt!
- Ask: How much money did the fellow servant owe the king's servant?
- Say: It wasn't as much as the king's servant owed the king. He owed one hundred denarii. That was 100 days' worth of wages, or in today's earnings, about \$20,000.
- Ask: What was the fellow servant's attitude and what was the king's servant's response? [Have a student read Matthew 18:28-30.]
- Say: The fellow servant had the same willingness to pay as did the king's servant! Their attitudes of repentance and sorrow were the same! Yet the king's servant refused to forgive.
- Ask: Would you say that the king was willing to forgive a lot more debt than was owed the king's servant?
- Say: The king's servant owed the king about 10,000 times what his fellow servant owed him!
- Ask: What happened when the king heard about his servant not forgiving the fellow servant? [Have a student read verses 32 through 35.]
- Say: God tells us in the last verse that if we don't forgive others, He won't forgive us of the debt we owe Him. God is giving us a very important lesson here. He's trying to show us the difference between how much we have sinned against Him compared to how much others have sinned against us.
- Ask: When we sin against God, what is the penalty for doing so? [Have a student read Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death."]
- When others "sin against" you, do you think that their transgression against you demands dying?
- Say: Probably not. When we are teased, ridiculed or humiliated, it is not like a sin against God.

Ask: Since God is willing to forgive us when we repent, shouldn't we be willing to forgive others?

Ask: How often should we forgive others? [Ask a student to read Luke 17:3-4.]

Say: Did you all notice that the scripture tells us to forgive someone seven times in one day if they repent? That's a lot of times. But God forgives us every time we make a mistake as long as we still desire to change.

Ask: Is there ever a time we forgive people if they are not sorry? [Ask a student to read Luke 23:34].

Say: Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was humiliated, beaten, flogged with a whip that had pieces of metal sewn into it and killed by crucifixion—the worst possible death at that time.

Ask: And yet, what did Jesus Christ say of those who killed Him? [Take answers from the children.]

Say: The Roman soldiers thought they were right in what they were doing. They thought they were carrying out orders to kill a person who had blasphemed against God. They really did not know they were killing the Messiah. They thought that they were just doing their job.

Sometimes people don't realize they are hurting us. Sometimes they punish us by mistake. When that happens, God wants us to forgive just as Christ forgave.

Ask: What did Christ teach us in His model prayer? [Have a student read Matthew 6:14-15. Emphasize that God will forgive us as we forgive others.]

Say: We must learn to forgive as the king of the unmerciful servant forgave and as Jesus Christ forgave. Forgiveness is a choice. Forgiveness is not always given because it is deserved. It is sometimes given even though it is not deserved. It is easier to forgive someone if that person says he or she is sorry; but that may not always be the case. Ask God to give both of you a change of heart or mind—so that the other person will be sorry, recognizing what they have done to you, and so that you can forgive.

And remember, our problems, our sins, our mistakes are greater because when we do something wrong, we sin against God. This is worse than anything another person can do to you or me. So the next time, you are ridiculed, made fun of, put down or teased, remember God's instruction to always be willing to forgive so God can forgive you.

LESSON APPLICATION:

Have students complete the forgiveness puzzle. When the students are finished with it, the line will read, "The king forgave his servant; I will forgive others." Tell the students what this sentence means and explain how difficult it is.

Forgiveness

Each number represents a letter in the alphabet. Figure out the code and the secret message.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
					19	13	6			9							18	17	3						

3 6 4
9 12 2 13
19 7 18 13 14 20 4
6 12 17

17 4 18 20 14 2 3
12 23 12 24 24
19 7 18 13 12 20 4

7 3 6 4
18 17

Music:

“Forgive and You Shall Be Forgiven” on pages 22-23 of the United Church of God hymnal. You might want to read the words on page 22 and have the children sing the words on page 23. In this way they can hear the story flow on page 22 and cement the words “forgive and you shall be forgiven” into their minds through singing.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:14-15 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

family activity

THE POINT:

To show through the story of the master and the servant in Matthew 18:21-35 that we must forgive those who are sorry and repent just as God forgives us.

ASK ME...

- How often should we forgive those who sin against us?
- What happens if we do not forgive others when they are sorry?
- Is there ever a time we should forgive people even though they are not sorry?

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

This week would be an excellent opportunity to have a family get-together and discuss the lesson of repentance. Since most families pray together at meal times and also as a family on Friday nights and perhaps other nights of the week, the subject of prayer would be a natural one to discuss.

You could begin the discussion by reminding the family that in Matthew 6 Christ instructed us to ask for forgiveness every single day. And then remind everyone that forgiveness is conditional every day. If we don't forgive one another every day, God will not forgive us. Sometimes we don't understand why our day is not going well, when in fact it's because we have an unforgiving spirit.

This could then lead to asking one another if there are any problems between the family members (siblings, for example). Parents can bring up examples of offenses that the children continue to bring up when they get mad at each other.

This type of family discussion can go a long way to promote healing family wounds and binding the family closer together. Such a discussion should start and end with family prayer.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:14-15 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."