

Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

Objective: The students will learn the story of the Prodigal Son and be able to state that when we sin, we are to ask forgiveness, and God will forgive us.

For the Catechist

In the kindergarten text, the children were taught that God wants only good things to happen and that they are to do good things. They were taught that bad things can happen "by accident" or "on purpose." In the lesson “Jesus Wants Me to Say 'I'm Sorry'” they were encouraged to say "I'm Sorry" whether they caused a bad thing to happen by accident or on purpose.

In this lesson they learn that God does not want us to hurt others; and when we do so, we are to ask forgiveness and God will forgive us. The story of the Prodigal Son is used to illustrate God's forgiveness. The story was also presented in the Kindergarten book.

The Importance of Love and Forgiveness. This lesson is presented in the unit that teaches about Jesus. Love and forgiveness were the cornerstone of Jesus' teaching. They are presented consecutively (lessons 10 and 11) for that reason. To many, asking forgiveness and also forgiving when hurt are difficult concepts to live. It is important for the child to remember that Jesus taught this. Whenever difficulties arise in the classroom and forgiveness is called for, remind the students that they are living as Jesus taught when they ask forgiveness.

The concepts of love and forgiveness are presented with a more personal emphasis in the next unit, "Learning to Love and Forgive." Asking forgiveness will be presented in Lesson 14, "We Are Forgiven." To illustrate the concept, the lesson uses the image of Jesus as the good shepherd looking for lost sheep.

The Prodigal Son. The Prodigal Son story (Luke 15:11 -13) is used most frequently to teach God's forgiveness. It is the Gospel for the Sunday before the Great Fast to encourage us to return to our God and our true home.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Lord's Prayer and Doxology.

Introduction: Jesus taught us how to live to be happy—love one another. **Need:** Nine index cards or pieces of paper on which are written the following: love, tree, another, house, one, toy, went, ball. On the ninth index card write "forgive."

Read Text Aloud: Ask questions noted on following pages as text is being read

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- Basic 1:* We Need to Say “I’m Sorry” to God

- Basic 2:* Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

- Group:* Role Playing “I’m Sorry”

- Craft:* Prodigal Son Story Stand-Up

Closing: The Lord’s Prayer and Doxology

Come Bless the Lord Icon:

Packet I:

Packet II: The Prodigal Son

Teaching Pics

Triodion (GL1)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)

Repentance

“The Lord Jesus made repentance central to His message and the way of life He was preparing for us. When asked to explain what He meant by 'repentance,' He gave the beautiful Parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32)” (*LLIII* 28).

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

"The parable is not some theologian's explanation of repentance, but rather the very words of the Son of God Himself who calls us to it. In the Parable, Jesus describes repentance as a 'coming back to life after having been dead,' a 'being found after having been lost' (Lk 15:32). The parable teaches that repentance is a process of returning to our true identity, discovering who we are as children of God and growing in that relationship.

"Repentance is a healing process. Through it we come to our natural condition (what we are created to be by nature not the 'natural' as it is termed in the fallen world). Notice that the 'son' begins by not understanding his relationship with his Father. He tries to define himself in terms of possessions, relationships and jobs—none of which ultimately satisfy. When he finally begins to repent in a positive sense and return to his father's home, he still has more repenting to do: he plans to 'earn' a relationship with his Father by serving for a while (thus 'saving' himself, the danger of 'perfectionism' rather than saving repentance). He finally must surrender and let his Father embrace him and draw him back into an authentic, loving relationship in which his identity is restored, his dignity confirmed and his well-being assured....

"The Parable also clearly teaches that the movement of repentance cannot take place without the acceptance of a double insight: how good God is ('It is better to be with my Father in His house') and how wretched my present situation is ('Why am I sitting in the pig pen?'). Neither insight in itself is sufficient to move us to repentance. If I am only convinced that my Father is good, then there will be no movement I will ask Him to send a check to refurbish the pig pen. Many modern people have this insight: God is 'that good, loving, accepting Old Man in heaven who benignly approves everything: I'm OK, you're OK.'

"On the other hand if I only have the insight of my wretchedness in the pig pen, there will also be no movement: I will stagnate in despair. Both insights are needed—and the realization of the Father's goodness should be the stronger, so that I do not fear to return to His loving embrace and rediscover who I am. Sure of His love and acceptance, I can admit my wretchedness and seek healing, moving away from the sinful situation and into the welcoming embrace of the Father" (*LLIII* 28-29).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Gather children around the icon corner. *Who remembers what our prayer is for this unit? (The Lord's Prayer and Doxology) Let's get ready to pray now.*

Introduction

Last week we learned the most important teaching of Jesus. He taught us three important words. Do you remember these cards? Which three do we need to make up the most important teaching? [Hold up each paper or index card and read the words; place cards on the table or papers on the chalkboard ledge.] What are the three words? [When "love," "one" and "another" are chosen, pull the card and hold it or place it where you can make the entire phrase.] Jesus' most important teaching was "Love one another."

What did we say that love means? [Allow responses.] Jesus taught us that love means one more thing. [Hold up "forgive" card.] Who can read this? Jesus taught us that love means "to forgive" when we are hurt. This isn't easy; but Jesus did it, and we can do it too. Love and forgive. We will be learning more about love and forgiveness in our next lesson. We can forgive those who hurt us because God will forgive US when we need forgiveness. Jesus told a story to help us see that God will forgive us. It's a story about a father and son. The son has been called the "Prodigal Son"

Listen as I tell you the story of the Prodigal Son. Let's say "Prodigal Son" together. . .

Once a young man left his father's house and took a lot of money. He was gone for many years. He wasted all his money and became very poor. He didn't have good clothes. He didn't have food to eat. He was very unhappy. He knew he had to go back home. He hoped his father could forgive him. When his father saw the son coming, he ran to him. The father embraced the son. He welcomed him home. The father had never stopped loving the son. The father was so happy to have the son home again.

This story has a lesson to teach us. Let's find out what we are to learn from the Prodigal Son.

11 Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

Jesus taught us to love.
But sometimes it is hard to love.

We get angry with others.
We hurt others.



We know that God doesn't want us to hurt others.
What should we do?

We need to ask forgiveness.
We need to say "I'm sorry" to the one we hurt.
We need to say "I'm sorry" to God.

Jesus taught us about God and forgiveness.
Here is the story He told.

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type). See "Reading of Text" in Lesson 1 for use of the Vocabulary Visual Aid.

What should we do?

[Allow responses, including brief stories, to the following:] *Have you ever gotten mad at someone? Have you ever hurt someone? Why? How do you feel when you've been hurt? God doesn't want us to hurt others even if we have been hurt by them. We should never hurt someone on purpose. What should we do when we've hurt someone? (Say I'm sorry; ask forgiveness.)*

We need to say "I'm sorry" to God?

Why do we have to say "I'm sorry" to God? (Because He doesn't want us to hurt one another) If we have hurt someone we have gone against His plan, His way of living. We don't want to go against God's way. We need to say "I'm sorry" to God.

The father was very hurt.

Why do you think the father was hurt? (His son left home.)

He went back home to his father.

What happened after the son left home? (He wasted all money; he didn't have food.) If you were the son, do you think your father would forgive you? [Allow responses.]

The father forgave the son.

What showed the son that he was forgiven? (His father embraced him.) How do you think the son felt then? [Allow responses.]



Once a young man left his father's house and took a lot of money. The father was very hurt.

The son was gone for many years. He wasted all his money and became very poor. He didn't have food to eat.



He went back home to his father. The father ran out to embrace the son. The father forgave the son.

God will forgive us.

Who is like the father in the story? (God) God will always forgive us. We should never be afraid to ask God to forgive us.

This is God's way.

There are two things Jesus wants us to do? What is one of them? (Love) What is the other? (Forgive) This is God's way. Love, and when we have not loved, when we have hurt someone, ask forgiveness. Do you remember the name of the story? (The Prodigal Son)

Activity Tracks

Basic 1: We Need to Say "I'm Sorry" to God

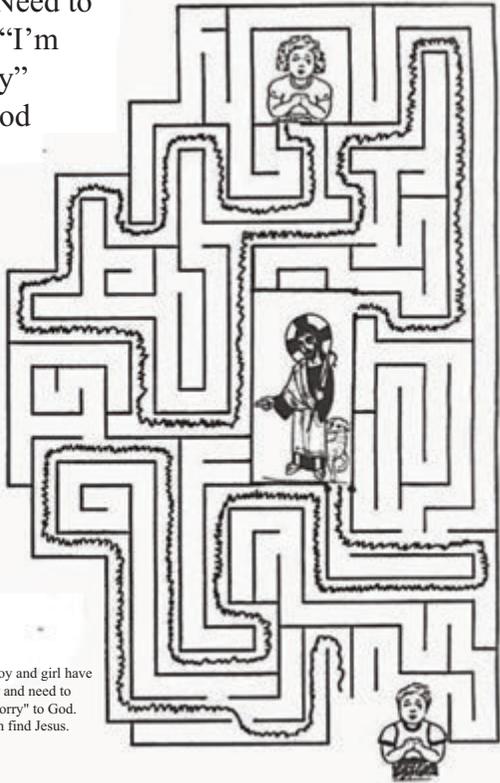
When we sin, we have left God's way of life. We feel lost. We need to say "I'm sorry" to the one we hurt and also to God. On our worksheet are two children who want to say "I'm sorry" to God. Help them find Jesus [Determine if you need to do this as a class or if children can work with a buddy or alone.]

Jesus taught us that God is like the father in the story. God will forgive us.



Jesus wants us to love. When we have hurt others, Jesus wants us to ask for forgiveness. This is God's way.

We Need to Say "I'm Sorry" to God



A. The boy and girl have hurt other and need to say 'I'm sorry' to God. Help them find Jesus.

Basic 2: Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

Today we learned that we are to say "I'm sorry" when we've hurt someone. Do we say this only when we've hurt someone on purpose? (No) See if you can follow the directions and remember what we learned today.

Group: Role-playing "I'm Sorry"

[If possible gather children into a circle.] *Let's do some pretending today. We learned that we can hurt people in two ways. Do you remember how?* [Recall vocabulary words if necessary.] *(By accident and on purpose) Which one is wrong and is called "sin"?* *(On purpose) Let's think of how people are hurt on purpose.* [Allow responses. When you have one, continue with] *Can we act that out? I need a volunteer. I'll be the one who does wrong.* [Stand in circle with volunteer and mimic the wrong action. Turn to class and say] *What should I say (and do) now?* *(Say "I'm sorry" (and try to make things right again, if appropriate.))* [Ask for another situation and volunteer. Repeat with "by accident" situations.]

Craft: Prodigal Son Story Stand-Up

Materials: "Prodigal Son Story" worksheet, construction paper, markers, tape

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we learned a story Jesus taught, "The Prodigal Son" Jesus taught us that story so we would always remember that God will forgive us.* [Show your example.] *To help you remember that we have a stand-up project for your room. It is the icon and the story of the Prodigal Son. Can anyone read the title?* [Have the children color the worksheet, cut out the block, and paste it onto a sheet of construction paper folded in half and folded with 1" margins for a standup base. Tape margins together if necessary.]

Closing

Let's gather at the icon corner. Let's be still and look at the icon of Jesus. [Say the "Lord's Prayer" slowly with the children; include the Doxology. Use the translation for your jurisdiction.]

God bless you. Have a good week!

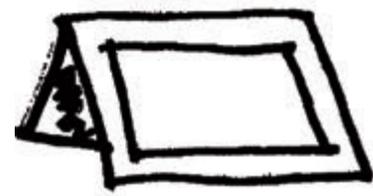
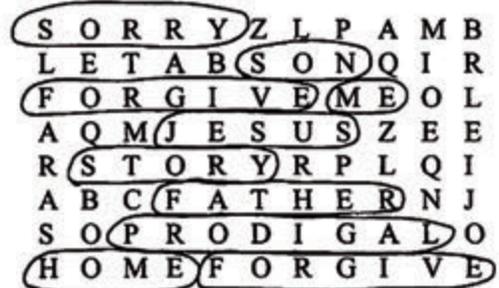
Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

A. Draw a line from the box by word to the correct picture.



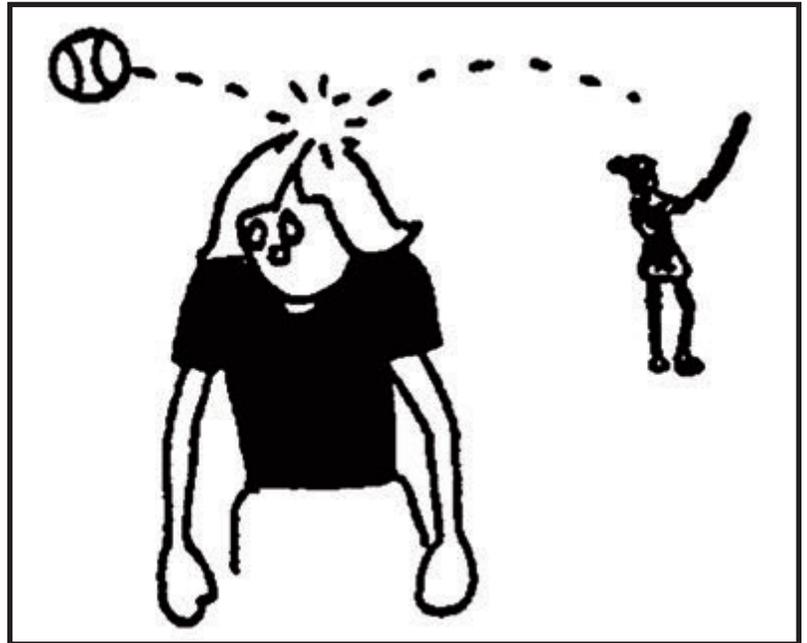
B. Word Search

Find some important words from today's lesson and circle them. Hints: Prodigal, father.





hurt



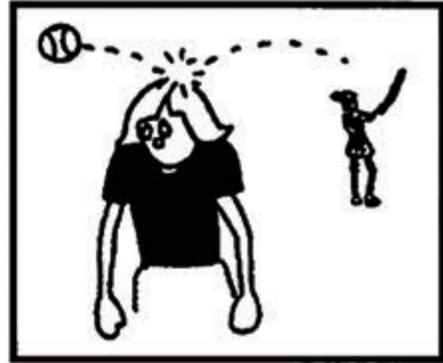
by accident



**on
purpose**

Jesus Taught Us to Ask Forgiveness

A. Draw a line from the box by word to the correct picture



on purpose by accident hurt

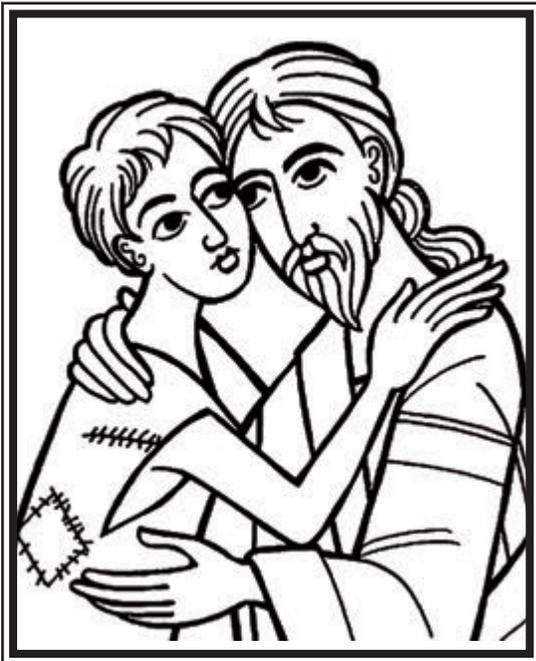
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A Q M J E S U S Z E E
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A B C F A T H E R N J
S O P R O D I G A L O
H O M E F O R G I V E

God Will Always Forgive Me

The Story of the Prodigal Son



Once a young man left his father's house and took a lot of money. He was gone for many years. He wasted all his money and became very poor. He didn't have good clothes. He didn't have food to eat. He was very unhappy.

He knew he had to go back home. He hoped his father could forgive him.

When his father saw him coming, he ran to him. He embraced him. He welcomed him home. The father loved the son.

Unit 3 Review

Who Is Jesus?

1. Who is Jesus?

(Lesson 8: Jesus is God's Son.)

2. What did Jesus teach us to call God?

(Lesson 9: Jesus taught us to call God "Father.")

3. What is Jesus' most important teaching?

(Lesson 10: Jesus taught us to love one another.)

4. Who made you and loves you?

(Lesson 5: God made me and loves me.)

5. Who is the Trinity?

(Lesson 3: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit)