



BIG IDEA

God wants me to forgive my family

BIBLE

Joseph Says, "I Forgive You"

Genesis 37, 43-45

MEMORY VERSE

"God saw everything he had made. And it was very good." Genesis 1:31 (NIV)

SCHEDULE: PLAY TIME ACTIVITIES **15-20 minutes**

LARGE GROUP LESSON **10-15 minutes**

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES: **25-35 minutes**

WELCOME (Enter & Free Play)

Directions: Welcome each child warmly as they enter. Allow children to play freely.

WORSHIP

Directions: During worship, encourage simple motions. Toddlers may clap, dance, sway, sit, watch, or be held by a leader.

Say: "Let's sing and worship God to thank Him for everything He has made for us!"

Keep expectations simple. Participation can look like clapping, dancing, watching, or sitting close.

BIBLE STORY | Joseph Says "I Forgive You"

Directions: Pass out the fruit snacks before the Bible Story video plays.

Before the video, say: "Today true Bible story is going to teach us that **God wants me to forgive my family!!** Let's say that together. **"God wants me to forgive my family."**

Memory Verse: "As for me (point to self with thumbs) and my family (trace a circle in front of you with fingers), we will serve (march in place) the LORD (point up)."
Joshua 24:15 (extend hands like holding a book)

Video: Play "Topher Time" video (Bible Story)



**SMALL GROUP
TODDLER**

BIBLE STORY INTRO

BUSY BIBLE BUILDERS INTRO: I have an idea. I'll say some really hard words, then you try to repeat them. (One at a time, say the words listed below, then have the children repeat them back. Have fun with it!)

- Bippidy boppidy boop
- Worcestershire sauce
- My enemy is an anemone
- Swim, swan, swim!
- Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers
- Betty Botter bought a bit of butter

Wow — those were some REALLY hard words to say! But I have some words that are even harder to say. Try to repeat these words after me. "I forgive you." (Children repeat.) You're probably thinking, "That was easy!" And you're kind of right. But those words are hard to say for a very different reason. When someone does something mean to us, it's hard to say, "I forgive you," because a lot of times we feel mad and don't want to say it.

In today's true Bible story, there's a man who says those hard words to his brothers. Even though they did something mean to him, he said, "I forgive you." If you're ready to hear that story, wiggle your fingers in the air. (Children wiggle fingers.) Great! First, let's get our Bible out of the Super Duper Bible Box. (Move to the Super Duper Bible Box.) I need your help getting the Bible out, though. We need to say our special Bible words together. Repeat these special words after me: It's true, it's true, the Bible is true!

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

(Note: The numbered story pages around the room on the walls.)

Let's get busy building. Let's find the **blue #1** picture so we can see what happened first in our Bible story. (Carefully remove the pictures from the wall when the kids point out the correct number and turn the picture facing the children, and repeat with each one.) What do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening? (Take answers.) In the Bible, in the Book of Genesis, there was a boy named Joseph who had 11 brothers. Whoa — that's a lot of brothers. Let's count to 11 together. (Count with children to 11.) Joseph's dad loved Joseph more than he loved any of his 11 brothers.

Let's find our next story picture. Can you find the **green #2** picture? What do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening? (Take answers.) Joseph's dad gave him a very special present. It was a coat with many colors on it. When Joseph's brothers saw the special coat, they knew their dad loved Joseph more than he loved them and it made the brothers so angry that they wanted to hurt Joseph.



Let's find our next story page. Can you find the **yellow #3** picture? What do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening? (Take answers.) One day, Joseph's brothers were out in the field taking care of sheep. When they saw Joseph coming, they came up with a terrible plan. They tore Joseph's special coat off of him and they threw him into a big hole. Then they sold him to traders who took Joseph to Egypt and made him into a slave.

Let's find our next story picture. Can you find the **red #4** picture? What do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening? (Take answers.) Being a slave was very hard, but God was with Joseph. He helped Joseph become a powerful leader in Egypt. Joseph was in charge of giving food to the people. One day, many years later, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt looking for food. When the brothers saw Joseph, they didn't recognize him, but Joseph recognized them.

Let's find our last story picture. Can you find the **purple #5** block? What do you see in this picture? What do you think is happening? (Take answers.) At first, Joseph pretended like he didn't know his brothers and he spoke harshly to them, but then he couldn't take it anymore. Joseph broke down crying and said, "It's me, Joseph, your brother who you sold into slavery! Don't be upset with yourselves for selling me to this place. This was all a part of God's great plan." Then Joseph hugged and kissed each of his brothers. Even though Joseph's brothers had been mean to him, Joseph forgave them and was happy to see them.

God gives us a family to love us and help take care of us, but sometimes they do mean things. Has your brother, or sister, or cousin ever done something mean to you? (Children respond.) When your family does something mean, it's okay to feel mad at first, **but God wants you to say, "I forgive you,"** just like Joseph did. Let's practice saying those hard words. When your brother breaks your favorite toy, you can say (point to children), **"I forgive you."** When your sister scribbles all over your favorite drawing, you can say (point to children), **"I forgive you."** When your cousin says something mean to you, you can say (point to children), **"I forgive you."** Great job!

Sometimes forgiving our family is hard, but Jesus can help. If someone is mean to you and it makes you angry, pray to Jesus and ask Him to help you forgive. Then think about how God forgives you. God forgives us and He wants us to forgive our family.

PRAYER: Let's say a prayer together and thank God for giving us our family

**Dear God,
Thank you for forgiving me
When I do mean things.
Please help me forgive my family
When they do mean things to me.
Amen.**



ACTIVITIES

Coloring Page: **Joseph Says, "I Forgive You"**

Directions: Give each child a coloring page. Let them color freely. Point to Joseph hugging his brothers as they color. Be sure to write each child's name on their picture.

COAT OF MANY COLORS

Supplies: "Coat of Many Colors" activity sheet (1 per child), tissue paper squares (multiple colors, 1 sheet per child), glue sticks (1 per child), markers or crayons

Directions: Give each child a "Coat of Many Colors" activity sheet and write their names on their page. Tell the children to glue the colored tissue paper squares to Joseph's coat. Encourage them to use many different colors. When finished, they can use markers or crayons to color the remainder of the picture.

Say: Wow — those are some very colorful coats! In today's true Bible story, there's a boy who had a coat with many colors. Do you remember his name? *That's right..... Joseph!*

Then something bad happened to his coat, do you remember what happens? *Joseph's brothers tore Joseph's special coat off him.*



LEADER DEVOTIONAL

Every Halloween my neighbors and I collectively make the same two mistakes. We somehow repeatedly overestimate how much candy to purchase and we leave our pumpkins out for way too long. The candy problem is fairly short-lived for me as I have both the sweet tooth and the metabolism of a twelve-year-old boy. The pumpkin issue, on the other hand, is a bit more problematic.

I don't know if you've ever watched a pumpkin decay, but it's not a pretty sight. After a while they become rotten and begin to turn black. My neighbor and I watch each other contemplate the question, "How do I pick this thing up without it falling apart on me?" Decaying pumpkins can be a bit of a predicament, but it's nothing compared to the problems caused by a decaying relationship.

We've all faced the dilemma of how to deal with a decaying relationship and we've all been daunted by the question, "How did it come to this?" For the pumpkin, the answer is simple — time. But for relationships it's usually much more complicated. It could be neglect, broken trust, harsh words, hurt feelings, or any number of other offenses, real or imagined. For most of us, we want to know the answer to the "why" question, but more than anything we want to know if things can ever be right again. We long for the one thing that can bring peace. We long for forgiveness. But how do we find it?

In Lewis Smedes' classic, *The Art of Forgiving*, Dr. Smedes outlines a process that he refers to as "radical spiritual surgery." Smedes says, "We rediscover the humanity of the person who hurt us. We surrender our right to get even. We revise our thoughts, feelings, and perceptions toward the person we forgive."

Sounds easy, right? Not so much! But with the help and grace of God, we can all walk this path. As we look at the story of Joseph we can certainly see God walk him through these three phases. Joseph is betrayed, conflicted, lied about, impassioned, and is elevated to the status of the hero of an empire. But in the end, Joseph isn't just a hero to a kingdom, but a hero that would bring a forgiving and healing peace to his own soul and the souls of his brothers. As you prepare this week, identify those who you have yet to forgive and receive forgiveness from the God who gives it freely.

John Garrison
GO! Contributor



**SMALL GROUP
TODDLER**

SMALL GROUP SKILL BUILDING

How to Prepare Like a Champ for Small Group

Picture this scene: Moments before children's church is scheduled to begin, a leader stands in the corner of the room with their face buried in some papers labeled "Small Group Lesson." They seem oblivious to the kids moving quickly and loudly all around them. A bead of sweat rolls down their face. The clock ticks loudly as they read at a fevered pace. Have you seen this leader? Are you this leader? There's no judgment here! We get it — life is often really busy and finding the time to volunteer, much less prepare, can be tough. But by investing just a small amount of time into preparation, you can go from being a good leader to a great one. Here's how:

Read your lesson ahead of time. You saw that one coming, didn't you? When the kids arrive, it's game time. When you've read the lesson ahead of time, the kids get your full attention from the moment they walk in. When small group begins, you'll be able to lead much more effectively if you're not trying to figure the lesson out for yourself at the same time you're explaining it to your group.

Familiarize yourself with the materials. Many of the small group activities in the GO! curriculum have materials that go with it. When you read the lesson at home, you might have a picture of what the materials look like, but double check to make sure what you imagined matches reality when you arrive at church.

Prepare your own heart. The best way to lead the kids in your group is through example. Consider reading the Bible story ahead of time and asking yourself how it applies to your own life. Spend some time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to show you how you need to change in light of this story.