

Lesson Plan

October 4th, 2026

This Month's Truth: I Am Forgiven

Bible Story: Jesus Forgave and Healed a Man (Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26)

Theme Verse: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103:12)

Teachers rally with your team a few minutes before kids start to arrive: Rally is a pre-service time for you to be expectant and equipped before the kids start arriving. Go over the lesson and any ideas for the day. Pray over your space and for the kids that will be coming that they will be connected to the person of Jesus.

Share: This October, we get to teach kids that God's forgiveness gives them a fresh start! Because of Jesus, they can experience God's forgiveness and new life in Him. Today, we are teaching the story of when friends brought their paralyzed friend to see Jesus, hoping for healing. But Jesus didn't just heal the man—He offered him forgiveness. (Read Mark 2:9-11.) Kids will learn that they can be forgiven by God through Jesus—the best fresh start ever!

Pray: Lead the group in prayer, thanking God for His forgiveness and how His love has led your team to serve.

Pre Service

Arrival time, please use this time to build relationships with kids and encourage them to build relationships with one another.

Service

What To Do:

- **Teacher** Start 5-minute countdown **5 minutes prior to service start time.**

Teacher Opener: Hey everyone, my name is ____, and I am so excited that you are here today! Let's start by turning to a neighbor and saying, "I am glad you are here!" (I am glad you are here!) When you take something old and make it new, we call that a fresh start! Let me hear you say, "Fresh start" (Fresh start!) We get to learn all about how God gives us a fresh start!

Let's get ready to have some fun and learn about God together! Everybody, say, "Let's get started!" in 3-2-1! (Let's get started!)

Old and New

Game Rules:

1. Select five volunteers to come to the stage and hold one paper in each hand, making sure the images are hidden from the rest of the group.
2. Select two individuals to compete against each other in finding matches.
3. Direct one player to point to two cards, asking those volunteers to turn over their cards one at a time.
4. Award one point to the person that correctly matches a pair.
5. Alternate turns until all matches have been found.
6. Track points for each individual and announce the winner with the most matches.

What You Say: All right friends, we are going to play a super fun game called "Old and New!" Old and what? (New!) First, I need five volunteers to come to the front and be card holders. You will hold your card with the picture facing you so no one else can see it. These cards have old and new pictures of the same items. (Call players and distribute papers.)

Next, two players will compete against each other to find matches. (Choose players.)

Players, on your turn, you will point at one volunteer's hand, who will flip over that card. Then you will point at another volunteer's hand, who will flip over that card. If you match an old item with the new version of that item, then you earn a point. If there is no match, then those volunteers will flip their cards back over, and the other player gets a turn. We will keep going until all the matches are found. Everybody cheer for our players. You can even give suggestions to help the players on their turns! Let me hear you say, "Let's go!" (Let's go!)

Keep It Going: Shuffle the papers and play again with new volunteers and players. Allow kids to point and motion to communicate rather than talking.

What You Say: Look at how our players worked together. Everybody, say, "We did it together!" (We did it together!) Let's cheer for all our players and volunteers while they take a seat. (Allow time.)

Those "new" pictures were like a fresh change from the "old" pictures. Going from old to new like that can remind us of the fresh start God offers us. We all make wrong choices that go

against God's best plans for us. Those wrong choices are called sin, and sin is a big deal because it breaks our relationship with God. But God made the way for us to have a fresh start and be forgiven of our wrong choices. We can all be forgiven by God when we ask Him. Everybody say, "I am forgiven!" (I am forgiven!) When we ask God to forgive us, He does. Always! How often does God forgive us when we ask? (Always!) When I say, "What are you?" you say, "I am forgiven!" "What are you?" (I am forgiven!)

Transition Script to go into the Intro Video: Sometimes people will take something old and make something new, giving it a fresh start. Well, that is what DIY Dan loves to do! Ask, "Who is DIY Dan?" (Who is DIY Dan?) Get ready to meet him by saying, "Let's DIY!" (Let's DIY!)

Play Intro Video

What You Say: A "How-Sorry-Are-You Machine" seems like a good idea, but Dan actually apologizing to his neighbor was a much better idea. Say, "Much better idea, Dan!" (Much better idea, Dan!) Dan needed to ask his neighbor for forgiveness, but we all need to ask God for forgiveness. We all make wrong choices, and those wrong choices need to be forgiven. The great thing we get to learn today is that God can forgive us. Everyone, say, "God can forgive me!" (God can forgive me!)

Worship

What You Say: Worship is telling and showing God how great, special, and wonderful He is. It means giving God the highest worth because of who He is and what He has done. Think of it as a giant "thank you" and a celebration party for God. So, let's all come together and worship God this morning.

What To Do:

- Turn lights off
- 2 songs of worship
- **Teachers and Small Group Leaders worship with the kids, modeling what it looks like to give God our praise. Stand in the front of the room, or next to the kids- but not in the back.**
- Dismiss the kids back to their seats when the songs are over

What To Do:

- Have the kids **open up** a physical Bible and find the Bible story for that day.
- Use the Bibles provided in the classroom if a kid does not have their own Bible with them.

Transition Script to go into the Bible Story Video: (Open the Bible to Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26.) Today, we get to hear an amazing true story from the Bible. From where? (The Bible.) The Bible is God's true message to us about Himself. Today's Bible story comes from two books in the New Testament called Mark and Luke. Let me hear you say, "Mark and Luke!" (Mark and Luke!) Good job. Mr. Kirkman, who is a counselor at Cherry Hill Academy, will tell us all about God's forgiveness. Let's count down to watch the Bible story together! 3-2-1!

Play Bible Story Video

Questions to consider asking after the video:

- What is something that you learned about God from the video?
- What is something that you learned about people?
- What can you take away from the video?
 - How can you apply the lesson from today into your life?

Making The Connection Script: Imagine what it would be like to not be able to walk and then to meet Jesus. You hope He will heal you because others have been healed by Him. But then you get to experience His forgiveness and healing! The man and his friends may have thought the best thing Jesus could do was heal the man's body. But Jesus gave the man something better! Jesus showed that He has the power to forgive sins and give the man a fresh start, even when it seems impossible.

You might wonder if forgiveness is actually better than physical healing. You might even think, But what if I do not think my choices are wrong, and I do not feel like I need forgiveness? That is a really good question. Sometimes we might not realize our choices hurt ourselves or others. Sometimes we don't even realize the choices we make are actually wrong and go against what God says is best. The truth is that sin is a big problem. In fact, it is such a big problem that we need help to fix it.

Use the Three Circle Graphics on the Playlist

(Circle 1) When God created the world, it was perfect and good. No one needed God's forgiveness and a fresh start because everything was perfect. God designed people to have a

perfect relationship with Him and others and while enjoying the world He created. But something went super wrong! Say, “Super wrong!” (Super wrong!) Remember today’s Bible story? The man we learned about was hurting on the outside and on the inside. That’s not part of the perfect world God made.

(Circle 2) When we look at our world and even ourselves, we can see that there is brokenness. We can see that the world and people are not perfect, like how God created them. Point one hand to your left and one to your right. (Demonstrate and allow time.) See how our hands are pointing in opposite directions? That is like us choosing to do what we think is best instead of following what God says is best and that is called sin. The first two people God created sinned, and since then, all people sin. Sin breaks our perfect relationship with God. When we make choices that hurt others, ourselves, or our relationship with God, we might not think it is a big deal. Sometimes, we can be like the man in the story who could not walk. He thought he just needed his legs to be healed. But like him, you and I also need God’s forgiveness more than anything else. While our sin is bad news, there is good news! Say, “Good news!” (Good news!)

(Circle 3) Jesus came to make the way for us to be forgiven. God sent Jesus, His only Son, to take the punishment we deserve for our sins. Let me hear you say, “Wow” (Wow!) Jesus was perfect and never sinned, but when He died, He took our punishment for sin. When Jesus came back to life on the third day after He died, He showed that He is more powerful than both sin and death. Through this, Jesus made a way for us to be forgiven. Jesus showed the man in today’s Bible story that He could offer God’s forgiveness. God can also forgive our sins and give us a fresh start.

If we ever wonder whether or not we really need God’s forgiveness, we can remember that we are not the ones who decide. God is! And what He says about us in the Bible is actually true, even if it goes against what we feel. Our feelings can deceive us, but God’s truth will never trick or deceive us. And what God says is true! Every person needs to be forgiven and receive a fresh start. Point to yourself and say, “Who, me?” (Who, me?) Yes, you! All people everywhere need forgiveness!

God forgives us when we ask Him; then we can repent and turn away from sin to trust and follow Jesus instead. Point one hand to the left and one to the right again. (Demonstrate and allow time.) Now take your right hand and point to the left, just like your left hand is pointing. (Allow time.) That is what repentance, or turning away from sin to follow God, looks like. We repent when we turn from going our own way and choose to follow God’s way. Let me hear you say, “God can forgive me!” (God can forgive me!) We all need forgiveness, and God can forgive us. Say, “God gives me a fresh start!” (God gives me a fresh start!)

If you have questions or want to know more about forgiveness and Jesus, talk with me or your Small Group Leader.

Theme Verse Review:

Theme Verse Motions:

As far as the east is from the west, (Bring your right arm to your side with elbow bent and palm facing out, then do the same with the left.)

so far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Push your right arm straight out and around to the right with your palm facing out, then do the same with the left, pushing it to the left.)

Psalm 103:12 (Hold both hands out like a book.)

What You Say: Let's all learn a verse from the Bible to remind us that we can be forgiven by God. When I say, "Fresh start" you say, "I am forgiven!" "Fresh start!" (I am forgiven!)

Play Theme Verse Video

What You Say: This Bible verse shows us that God forgives us completely. Just like the east is so far from the west— and you cannot measure it—God removes our sins from us and gives us a fresh start through His Son, Jesus. Everybody, say, "God can forgive me!" (God can forgive me!) That means we can always have a fresh start with God.

Large Group Closing:

What You Say: Our Bible story helped us learn the truth that we can be forgiven by God and get a fresh start. We can be forgiven by God and get a what? (Fresh start!) That's right! Like how Jesus forgave and healed the man, God forgives us and gives us a fresh start. That is who He is, and that is what He loves to do. Say, "God can forgive me!" (God can forgive me!) No matter how we feel about ourselves or others, we can remember the truth that God can forgive us, and He forgives us when we ask—through Jesus. We can repent when we turn away from our sin and choose to follow God instead. Before we head out, let's take a moment to talk to God and thank Him for the forgiveness He offers through Jesus. Let's pray and talk with God in 3-2-1.

Closing Prayer: God, thank You for loving us so much. Thank You for sending Jesus to make the way for us to be forgiven and have a fresh start. Help us trust You, follow You, and remember that Your forgiveness is available. We love You. Amen.

Transition to Small Group Time: Split the kids into small groups. This can be done either by age, grade, or gender.

Small Group Time:

Option #1: Connection Questions

What To Do: Let's talk about how God gives us a fresh start and forgiveness—your thoughts and ideas are important, so let's share!

1. How can moving from an old grade to a new grade or moving from an old place to a new place feel like a fresh start? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)
2. The Bible tells us that we can be forgiven because of Jesus. Let's open our Bibles to **Mark 2:9-11** and read about it together. (Invite kids to open their Bibles. Read the passage aloud or invite a kid who volunteers to read the passage aloud. Be sure to have Bibles available for kids who need one. Help kids find the passage so everyone can follow along together.) Jesus told this man who could not walk that his sins were forgiven, which was the most important gift the man could receive. Jesus showed that He has the power to forgive sins and give people a fresh start, not just on the outside but on the inside too. Why is forgiveness such good news? (We all need to be forgiven, and God can forgive us.)
3. God made us to have a relationship with Him, but sin breaks that relationship. The good news is that God sent His Son, Jesus, to make the way for us to be forgiven and have a forever relationship with Him. What is different when God forgives us and gives us a fresh start? (Allow answers and share your own answer.)
4. The Bible tells us that we get a fresh start because God forgives us when we ask and trust Jesus. What is something you learned today? Is there anything you have questions about? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)

Option #2: Bible Story Slider

Younger Option: Precut the window slits.

Community Big Kids

1. Color the pictures on the printable.
2. Cut along the dotted lines along the top and the bottom of the window in the house.
3. Slide the strip from behind the house, through the top slit in the window, down, then backward through the bottom slit of the window.

What To Do: We get to make a really cool craft today to help us remember our Bible story about Jesus forgiving and healing the man who could not walk. Everybody, say, “Let’s make a craft!” (Let’s make a craft!) Here is what we are going to do: First, color all of the pictures on your paper. (Allow time.)

Next, carefully cut along the dotted lines at the top and bottom of the window on the house. (Allow time, assisting as needed.)

Finally, slide the pointed part of your strip of paper through the back of the window, then down through the front. Then you can slide the paper strip down and remember how Jesus forgave and healed the man in our Bible story!

Leader Tip: Encourage each child by name, asking about the color choices or how the paralytic man might have felt. Use this time to share briefly how God forgives. Help connect the story to the kids’ own lives.

Loud And Clear: Look at your pictures! The man and his friends thought the best thing Jesus could do was heal the man’s legs, but Jesus showed that He could do something even better. Only God has the power to forgive someone’s sins and wrong choices, and Jesus forgave the man! Jesus showed that we all need forgiveness, and God can forgive us. When you show people your slider, you can share the good news that God can forgive us. Say, “God can forgive me!” (God can forgive me!)

Option #3: Activity Page

What To Do: This activity page helps us remember some big things we have learned about today. As you color and work on activities, talk to a friend about some of your favorite parts of our time together.

Leader Tip: Get to know the kids better. Ask them what they remember about the Bible story or talk about how Jesus showed He had the power to both forgive and heal. Jesus taught that God can and does forgive sin.

Loud And Clear: God forgives us when we turn from sin to trust and follow Jesus! He removes our sin as far as the east is from the west and gives us a fresh start. Remember, we all need to be forgiven by God, and God forgives us when we ask!

Close out in prayer:

What To Do:

- Ask for any specific prayer requests
- Pray with the group
- Lead the group in the prayer below.

What You Say: God, thank You for sending Jesus to give us a fresh start for our sin, just like He did for the man in our Bible story. Help us remember that You are ready to forgive us and help us follow You. You can—and You do—forgive us, so help us enjoy Your forgiveness and share that good news with others. Amen.

Dismissal:

Leader Tip: Work with your team to dismiss the kids in a fun, manageable, and safe way. As kids leave, make sure they have all of the crafts and papers. Share with the person picking them up something positive you observed today. Invite them back next week.