

# Bob, The Unmerciful

## PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:21-35

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 18:22, 'Jesus answered, I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'

## The Children's Sermon

Hey kids! Today, we're going to talk about a really important word - forgiveness. Have you heard of it? Forgiveness is when you decide to be okay with someone who has done something wrong to you, and you choose not to stay mad at them. It's like when someone takes your toy without asking, but then they say they're sorry, and you decide to still be friends. That's forgiveness!

Now, there's a special story in the Bible, in a book called Matthew, chapter 18, that talks all about forgiveness. It's like a treasure map that shows us how to forgive others. Jesus wanted us to know how important it is to forgive people, not just once, but lots and lots of times.

Jesus told a story about a king and a servant. The servant owed the king a huge amount of money, like more money than you could spend on a million ice creams! But the servant didn't have enough money to pay the king back. The king could have been really mad and punished the servant. But guess what? The king felt sorry for the servant and forgave his big debt. He let him go without paying back the money. That was a super kind thing to do, right?

But then, the servant who was forgiven went out and found another servant who owed him a little bit of money, like the price of a single ice cream. Even though he had just been forgiven for a huge debt, he didn't forgive the other servant. He was really mean to him because he wanted his money back. That wasn't very nice, was it?

When the king found out, he was very disappointed. He had shown the first servant so much kindness by forgiving him, but then the servant didn't do the same for someone else. Jesus used this story to teach us that since God forgives us for so many things, we should also forgive others.

Forgiveness in Matthew 18 is like a key that unlocks a happy heart. When we forgive, we let go of being mad or sad about what someone did. It helps us not to carry around heavy feelings. Imagine if you had to carry a heavy backpack everywhere you went. It would make you tired and grumpy, right? Well, not forgiving is like carrying that heavy backpack all the time. Forgiving helps us take off the backpack and feel light and happy.

Sometimes, forgiving can be hard. Maybe someone keeps taking your toy, or they say something mean, and it makes you not want to forgive them. But remember, forgiveness is not just for them; it's for you too. It helps you be happy and peaceful inside.

And guess what? You don't have to do it alone. You can ask God to help you forgive. You can say, "God, it's really hard for me to forgive this person, but I want to be happy and not carry around this heavy backpack of mad feelings. Can you help me forgive?" And God will help you because He's really good at helping us forgive.

Forgiveness in Matthew 18 also teaches us about how many times we should forgive. Peter, one of Jesus' friends, asked if forgiving someone seven times was enough. But Jesus said we should forgive seventy times seven. That's a lot of times! It doesn't mean you have to count up to 490 times. It just means you should keep forgiving, no matter what, just like God does for us.

When we forgive, we're being like Jesus, and that's a really good thing. Being like Jesus makes the world a better place. It makes our hearts happy, and it makes God happy too.

So, let's remember to be super forgivers, just like the king in Jesus' story. Let's not hold onto mad feelings but let them go and forgive. That way, we can have happy hearts and be great friends, just like Jesus wants us to be.

Let's try to be like Jesus and forgive, forgive, forgive. It will make your heart feel as light as a feather and as happy as when you're playing with your friends on a sunny day. Thanks for listening, and don't forget, forgiveness is the key to a happy heart!

## Bible Memory Verse

**Matthew 18:22, 'Jesus answered, I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'**

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write the memory verse on each heart with a marker.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart and some markers or crayons. Explain that the heart represents God's love and forgiveness.
2. Ask the children to decorate their hearts with markers, crayons, and stickers as you talk about the importance of forgiving others many times, just like Jesus teaches us.
3. After they finish decorating, gather the children and recite the memory verse together. Encourage them to take their hearts home and put them somewhere they can see every day to remember to always forgive others.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A small box or container (to represent the king's treasure)
- Play money or paper hearts (to represent the debt)
- A simple crown (to represent the king)
- Dolls or action figures (to represent the servants)

Get Ready:

- Place the play money or paper hearts inside the box.
- Set the dolls or action figures, the box, and the crown in the play area where the story will be told.

Do this:

1. Start by telling the children that we are going to learn about forgiveness through a story Jesus told. Put the crown on one of the dolls or action figures to represent the king.
2. Explain that the king wanted to collect the money people owed him. Show the box with the play money or paper hearts. Pretend to have the king ask one of the other dolls (the servant) for the money he owes. Use a big number to explain how much was owed, like "a lot" or "as much as all the toys in the world."
3. Show how the servant couldn't pay, so he asked the king for more time. Have the child playing the king say, "I forgive you. You don't have to pay me back." and then remove the play money or hearts from in front of the servant doll.
4. Next, have the forgiven servant doll go to another doll (another servant) that owes him a small amount (like one toy). Pretend the forgiven servant doesn't want to forgive this small debt and is mean to the other servant.
5. Gather the children and ask how they think the king felt when he heard the servant he forgave didn't forgive someone else. Explain that the king was sad and asked the unforgiving servant why he couldn't forgive a small debt when he was forgiven for a much larger one.
6. Conclude by emphasizing that Jesus wants us to forgive others just like the king forgave the servant. Ask the children to think of someone they can forgive and encourage them to be like the king, always ready to forgive.
7. End with a simple prayer, asking God to help us forgive others.

## Snack Activity: Forgiveness Sandwiches

You'll Need:

- Bread (white or whole wheat)
- Peanut butter (or any nut/seed butter for allergies)
- Jelly or jam

- Heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Plastic knives or spreaders

Get Ready: Make sure the table is clean and each child has a small plate and a spreader. If using a communal jar of peanut butter or jelly, portion some out onto a separate plate to avoid double-dipping.

Do this:

1. Use the heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut out two bread hearts per child. Explain that the heart shape reminds us of love and forgiveness, just like in the story of the Unmerciful Servant.
2. Have the children spread peanut butter on one heart and jelly on the other using their plastic knives or spreaders. As they do this, talk to them about how spreading the peanut butter and jelly is like spreading kindness and forgiveness to others.
3. Put the two halves together to make a sandwich. Share that just as the two halves of the sandwich come together, we should come together in forgiveness, showing love just as Jesus teaches us in the parable.

## Game Activity: Forgiveness Tag

You'll Need:

- A large, open play area (indoors or outdoors)
- Soft foam balls or beanbags (one for each child)
- Colorful markers or tape

Get Ready: Mark a start line and a finish line in the play area. Explain the story of The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant to the children in simple terms, focusing on the importance of forgiving others as we have been forgiven.

Do this:

1. Line up the children at the start line. Each child holds a foam ball or beanbag. Explain that these represent the 'debts' or wrong things that need forgiveness.
2. When you say 'Go', children will gently toss their ball/beanbag forward and hop or run to it. Before they can pick it up and throw it again, they must say, 'I forgive you' or a simple 'Forgive!' to remind them of the theme of forgiveness.
3. The first child to reach the finish line with their ball/beanbag and say 'I forgive everyone!' wins. After the game, gather the children and talk briefly about how good it feels to forgive and be forgiven, just like in the parable.

## Craft Activity: Heart Chains of Forgiveness

You'll Need:

- Construction paper in various colors
- Scissors (to be used by the teacher or with adult supervision)
- Markers or crayons
- Stapler or tape

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into strips about 1 inch wide and 6 inches long.

Do this:

1. Talk to the children about the story of the Unmerciful Servant, explaining how it teaches us to forgive others just as God forgives us.
2. Have each child choose several strips of construction paper. On each strip, they can draw or write something kind or a simple 'I forgive you' message.

3. Show the children how to form a circle with one strip of paper and secure it with a stapler or tape, creating the first link of their chain. Then, they can loop another strip through the first link, secure it, and continue this process to create a chain.
4. As they work, discuss how each link in the chain represents a choice to forgive, and how making many forgiving choices keeps our hearts connected and happy, just like the chain.

## Prayer Activity: Heartfelt Forgiveness Prayer

You'll Need:

- Paper hearts (one per child)
- Markers or crayons
- A 'Forgiveness Jar' or box

Get Ready: Before the class, prepare a 'Forgiveness Jar' or box. Write 'Forgiveness' on it and decorate it with stickers or drawings of hearts. Cut out paper hearts from construction paper, enough for each child to have one.

Do this:

1. Tell the children the story of The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant in simple terms. Focus on how the king forgave the servant's big debt, and how we should forgive others too.
2. Ask the children to think of a time they felt someone hurt them or a time they needed to forgive someone. Help them draw or write it on the paper heart.
3. Lead the children in a simple prayer, asking God to help them forgive others as He forgives us. After the prayer, have each child place their heart in the 'Forgiveness Jar' as a symbol of letting go of hurt and choosing to forgive.