

CHRISTIAN VALUE

FORGIVENESS

OSCAR OUT OF THE BOX

BIBLE STORY

The unforgiving servant (Matthew 18.21-35)

IN THE BOX

BIBLE, CROSS AND CANDLE

PLAY MONEY – A LARGE PILE OF NOTES AND A FEW COINS



LEARNING FOCUS

God forgives us as we forgive one another.

Black text - Leader's Script

Red text - Prompts for Leader

Sit with the children in a circle. Place the box beside you.



Welcome



Welcome to worship time everyone and welcome to Oscar.

Take Oscar out of the box on your hand.

Oscar is going to help spread out our worship cloth and take out the other special symbols for worship time.

Spread out the cloth to create the sacred space for worship.

Leader: As we take out the Bible, we think about God the Father.

(Sung responses optional)

Father, we are here, (x3)

We are here for you.

Leader: As we take out the cross, we think about God's Son, Jesus.

(Sung responses optional)

Jesus, we are here, (x3)

We are here for you.

Leader: As we take out the candle and light it, we think about God the Holy Spirit.

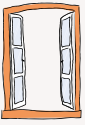
(Sung responses optional)

Spirit, we are here, (x3)

We are here for you.

I wonder what you think it means to forgive someone.

How many *times* should we forgive them?



Learn



Tell the story using the story props.

Oscar Owl has found a story in the Bible that Jesus told about forgiveness. He asks God to help him see and understand the story, not with his own eyes but with the eyes of his heart.

As he reads, in his imagination Oscar sees a king. And standing in front of the king is a man who looks very, very unhappy. He is one of the king's servants.

"You owe me money!" the king roars.

(Take a big pile of play money out of the box)

"Lots and lots and lots of money!"

"I know. I know," the man replies. "But I simply don't have enough money, right now, to pay you back."

"Then I will take everything that you own," the king roars again, "as a punishment for borrowing money that you can never pay back."

The man falls on his knees before the king. He is weeping now. And Oscar feels sad for him.

"Please," he begs. "Give me more time. And I promise that I will pay you back everything I owe."

The king sits back on his throne. He rubs his chin with his hand. Oscar can tell that he is thinking very hard.

Finally, the king speaks. He is no longer roaring, in fact his face looks kind. And what he says, surprises everyone in the room.

"I have decided to show you mercy and forgive your debt," he announces. "You owe me nothing. Now go."

The man thanks the king and leaps to his feet and runs from the throne room, just as fast as he can.

Oscar imagines how happy the servant's wife and children will be when they hear the news.

But the man isn't going to see his wife and his children. No, he is looking for a man who owes him money. And not a lot of money either.

(Take a few coins out of the box)

Just one day's wages.

When the servant finds the man, he grabs him by the throat and nearly chokes him. Oscar finds it all very upsetting.

"Pay me what you owe me!" he shouts, much as the king had done to him.

And just as he had done, the man falls to his knees and begs for more time to pay the money back.

But instead of forgiving the man's debt, instead of showing mercy as the king had shown him, the servant drags the man off to prison.

Some other servants see what is happening. They run off to tell the king. And it isn't long before the unforgiving servant is on his knees in the throne room again.

Oscar hides his face behind one wing. Things do not look good.

"You unkind servant!" the king roars. "I had mercy on you and forgave your enormous debt.

Why can't you do the same for someone who owes you just a little?"

Then the king calls for the jailer.

"Take this man to prison," he says. "He can wait there until his debt is paid."

So off to prison the unforgiving servant goes.

Oscar closes the Bible and becomes quite still and in the stillness he starts to think.

I wonder what *you* are thinking.

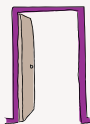


Reflect



I wonder why Jesus told this story.

Why do some people say that forgiveness is like a gift?



Respond

Let's come to God in prayer.

The response today is: ***Please forgive us God.***

Leader: If we have done things that are wrong,

All: *Please forgive us God.*

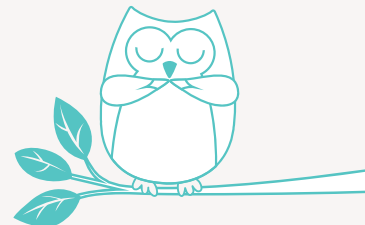
Leader: If there are times when we've not forgiven others,

All: *Please forgive us God.*

Leader: If we forget how much you love us,

All: *Please forgive us God.*

Amen.



It is time now for Oscar to go back in his box. As we pack away, let's blow out the candle and sing our Blessing Song.

**Father, as we go,
Jesus, as we go,
Spirit, as we go,
Bless us all, as we go.**



FORGIVENESS

OSCAR OUT OF THE BOX

BIBLE STORY

Zacchaeus has a new start (Luke 19.1-10)

IN THE BOX
 BIBLE, CROSS AND CANDLE
 PLAY MONEY, KNIFE AND FORK



LEARNING FOCUS

Jesus changes lives through the power of forgiveness.

Black text - Leader's Script

Red text - Prompts for Leader

Sit with the children in a circle. Place the box beside you.



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Welcome to worship time everyone and welcome to Oscar.

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Leader: As we take out the cross, we think about God's Son, Jesus.

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Jesus, we are here, (x3)

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Leader: As we take out the candle and light it, we think about God the Holy Spirit.

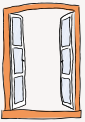
(Sung responses optional)

Spirit, we are here, (x3)

We are here for you.

I wonder how you feel when you see someone taking more than their fair share.





Learn



Tell the story using the story props.

Oscar Owl has found a story about Jesus in the Bible. It is also a story that helps us learn about forgiveness. He asks God to help him see and understand the story, not with his own eyes but with the eyes of his heart.

As he reads, in his imagination Oscar sees a man. A very small man. Sitting there on the branch, right next to him!

Oscar jumps and hoots and ruffles his feathers. He isn't used to seeing small men in trees.

"Shhh!" the man whispers, one finger to his lips. "You'll give me away. I'm a tax collector, you see." *(Take a pile of play money out of the box)*

"Those people, down there on the street, don't like me very much. Not just because I take their money. But because it goes to pay the Roman soldiers who like to beat them up and push them around. And also because, sometimes, I cheat them and take more money than I'm supposed to."

Oscar frowns. He is not sure he wants to sit next to the small man after hearing this.

"Anyway, there's this teacher called Jesus who's coming to town, and I think I'd like to see Him" says the man quickly. "But everybody down there wants to see Him, too. And ask Him to their house for dinner. So I think it will be safer to hide up here." Oscar is suddenly very interested indeed for he knows exactly who Jesus is.

Suddenly the crowd below begins to cheer. Jesus has arrived.

One by one, the people in the street ask Jesus to come to their house for dinner.

(Take the knife and fork out of the box)

And, one by one, Jesus answers them with a polite "no, thank you".

Then, at last, He walks up to the tree, Oscar's tree. And the tree where the small man is hiding.

"Zacchaeus!" Jesus calls. And the small man trembles.

"That's me!" he whispers. "How does Jesus know I'm here?"

Then Jesus calls again. "Zacchaeus, come down! I want to eat at your house today."

So down from the tree the small man climbs. And Oscar watches as he walks away with Jesus, and as the crowd grumbles and complains, "Why are you eating with him? He's a tax collector and a cheat!"

Oscar wants to see what happens next, so he flies after Jesus and Zacchaeus and waits in a tree just outside Zacchaeus' house.

The crowd waits there, too. They want to see what Jesus is up to. Perhaps He is telling Zacchaeus off for being such a bad person.

Finally, the door opens, and Jesus and Zacchaeus walk out.

"I've done some bad things," Zacchaeus admits. "But Jesus has forgiven me for them. And I want to show everyone that I am going to live differently from now on.

So if I have cheated you, I will pay you back four times more than I stole from you. And from now on, I will give half of my money to the poor."

(Take the play money and throw it in the air and shout hooray)

Jesus smiles. “Today, this man, this son of Abraham, has been well and truly saved.”

The people can’t believe it.

Zacchaeus is forgiven!

Zacchaeus is different!

Zacchaeus has changed for ever!

Oscar closes the Bible and becomes quite still and in the stillness he starts to think.

I wonder what *you* are thinking.



Reflect



I wonder which part of the story you like best.

What do you think Jesus said to Zacchaeus when he went into his house and ate with him?



Respond

Let’s come to God in prayer.

The response today is: ***Hallelujah!***, which means ‘Praise God’.

Leader: Zacchaeus was forgiven,

All: *Hallelujah!*

Leader: Zacchaeus was different,

All: *Hallelujah!*

Leader: Zacchaeus was changed for ever,

All: *Hallelujah!*

Amen.



It is time now for Oscar to go back in his box. As we pack away, let’s blow out the candle and sing our Blessing Song.

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