**The Unforgiving Servant**

**Age group: Preschool - Second Grade**

**Passage:** [**Matthew 18:21-35**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matt+18%3A21-35&version=KJV)

**A Story**

One day in Sunday school class, Mrs. Smith was teaching the Bible lesson as she typically did every week. Most of the children were sitting quietly listening as she was telling the story. There were two children, however, who were not quite paying attention. Sam put his feet on Sally’s chair. Well, Sally didn’t like Sam putting his feet on her chair. So, you know what she did? She HIT Sam. Uh oh!

Was that very kind of Sally? NO, of course not!

Well, Sam and Sally went home after class. But Sam had not forgotten what Sally had done to him. He was still mad at her for hitting him.

Another week went by, finding Sally and Sam once again in Sunday school class together.

Well, another week goes by, and Sally and Sam are at church again. Today things started out great, but soon took a turn for the worse. Mrs. Smith asked Sam to help pass out the papers. While he was helping pass out the papers, guess what happened? Sally stole Sam’s seat!

After passing the coloring papers out, Sam came back to seat only to find Sally sitting in. Well, instead of telling the teacher that there was a problem and letting Mrs. Smith take care of the problem, Sam got angry. He got so angry that he shoved Sally out of his seat! Sally fell to the floor landing on her elbow, giving her a small bruise.

Mrs. Smith told Sam he should not have pushed Sally even though she had taken his seat. Sam had to sit out of game time for a couple of minutes for pushing Sally and hurting her.

Later after game time, Mrs. Smith pulled Sam and Sally aside to talk to them. She read Ephesians 4:32 to them which tells us that we are to be kind to one another and that we are to forgive when others hurt us. Sam asked Mrs. Smith, “How many times do I have to forgive Sally? She keeps doing stuff to me to make me mad and upset.”

Mrs. Smith said, “That’s a good question Sam. One of Jesus’ disciples asked the very same question. He thought forgiving someone seven times was a lot. In our Bible lesson later today, we are going to find out what Jesus told this disciple.”

**Introduction**

Read: Matthew 18:21-22, *“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”*

One day, Peter (a disciple of Jesus) came and asked Jesus how many times he needed to forgive his brother. Peter thought forgiving him seven times would be quite sufficient.

If your sibling hit you seven different times and you forgave them each time, that would be quite a lot, wouldn’t it?

Jesus told Peter that he shouldn’t forgive just seven times. Jesus told Peter he should forgive seventy times seven. That was four hundred and ninety times! Four hundred ninety is a lot of times to forgive someone. Jesus actually didn’t mean this was the magic number of times we should forgive someone. This was a saying that really meant we should just keep on forgiving and forgiving no matter how many times someone does soothing wrong to us.

Jesus wanted Peter to understand forgiveness better, so He told him a story. Do you remember last week Jesus told His followers a story? We called that story a “parable.” Jesus taught His followers specific lessons by telling them stories called parables.

The Parable we are going to learn about today is about an Unforgiving Servant.

**The Servant’s Plea**

Read: Matthew 18:23-24, *“Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.* And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.”

One day the king was going over his accounts. Well, he came across the account of one of his servants who owed him ten thousand talents. Ten thousand talents was a lot of money. In fact, it was so much money that it would be impossible for this servant to ever pay this amount of money back to the king.

Read: Matthew 18:25-27, *“But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.* The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.”

This servant was brought before the king. The king told him to pay up. The servant told the king he had no money with which to pay the king. The king abruptly commanded his guards to seize the servant. He commanded the servant to be sold along with his wife, children, and all his belongings to pay off his debt to the king.

The servant fell down on his face before the king and pleaded for mercy. The servant said, “Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.”

The king’s heart was softened, and he was moved with compassion for the servant. He forgave the servant of the death and told him that he did not have to pay it back.

That was pretty generous of the king, wasn’t it?

**The Servant’s Pettiness**

Read: Matthew 18:28-30, *“But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.”*

But sadly, the servant leaves the presence of the king and makes a terrible mistake. He goes out and finds his friend who owes him a hundred pence. That was just a few dollars. He grabs him by the neck roughly and demands he pay him all the money.

The poor friend sadly didn’t have the money to pay him back right then. He asked for more time and promised that he would pay all the money that was owed.

The unforgiving servant had no compassion. He demanded him to be thrown into prison. You see, it used to be, if you owed someone money and could not afford to pay them back, they could have you thrown into prison. It didn’t matter if you owed someone a few dollars or thousands of dollars, you would be thrown in jail.

**The Servant’s Punishment**

**Read:**

Matthew 18:31-35, *“So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.* *Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”*

Some of the other servants heard what this servant had done. They felt it was unfair that their friend was thrown into jail for not being able to pay just a few dollars. They were angry and upset about how their friend had been unjustly treated.

It wasn’t before too long that word got back to the king about what the unforgiving servant had done. The king was very angry when he heard how the unforgiving servant had acted. The king had just forgiven him this enormous debt that he would never be able to repay. And yet, here he was requiring someone else to pay him just a few dollars they owed him.

The king once again summoned the unforgiving servant before his presence. He told the servant, “You should have had pity on your fellowservant just as I had pity on you. I forgave you this enormous debt and you should have forgiven the very small debt that was owed to you.”

The king called for his guards, “Take him away!”, he yelled. “He will stay in prison until he pays all that he owes.”

The servant was dragged away by the guards never to be seen again. You see, his debt was so great, he would never be able to repay it.

**Application**

When we don’t forgive those who have wronged us, we are like that unforgiving servant.

The king represents God. Each one of us owes an enormous debt to God for the many sins that we have committed. We have broken God’s laws in so many different ways. We break His law when we disobey our parents, when we tell lies. and when we hurt our siblings or friends.

When we brake God’s law that is sin. Sin is anything that we think (point to temple), say (point to mouth), or do (place one fist on top of the other) that displeases God.

Jesus Christ died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. When we ask Him to save us, God forgives us for our sin.

God wants us to forgive others in the same way He has forgiven us.

**Supplemental Ideas:**

Memory Verse:

Ephesians 4:32

Songs:

Behold What Manner of Love

Beloved, Let Us Love One Another

Lesson Activity:

Act out the story with costumes and have the children role play.

Have children think of someone they need to forgive. Pray and ask the Lord to help them to show kindness to the person who may have hurt them.

Coloring page: [Unforgiving Servant Coloring Page](http://www.bible-printables.com/Coloring-Pages/Jesus-Parables/P-20-The-Unforgiving-Servant-01.htm)