



## Day 1

### Faith Fact

God helps me forgive.

### Faith Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (NLT)

God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

**Question of the Day: What does it mean to really forgive someone?**

### Read about It

**Read:** Genesis 50:15–21

Has anyone ever hurt your feelings or made you sad? Maybe they called you a mean name, or said they didn't want to be your friend anymore. They might have said you can't play with them, but they let others and it made you feel angry or left out. When someone does something mean to us, it can sometimes leave a mark on us—not one that you can see with your eyes, but one you can feel on the inside. The next time you are around them, they might say they are sorry. You might say something like, "It's okay" or "I forgive you." Even though you might say those words, you might spend a lot of time remembering what they did to you when you are together.

It's kind of like putting a little bandage on a giant cut. It doesn't really make it better; it just covers it up. Every time we look at or bump the cut, it reminds us of how bad it hurt. Sometimes cuts can't heal on their own, and we have to go to a doctor and let the doctor sew it up.

As long as we hold onto unforgiveness, it keeps those marks on us on the inside and we feel that pain. But when we really forgive someone, we choose not to feel the hurt anymore and not to remind them of what they've done. Choosing to forgive is more than just covering it up with a bandage. It's letting yourself actually heal. In today's story, we read all about this with Joseph and his brothers. Joseph didn't just say the words, "I forgive you." But he meant what he said and showed them great kindness. As you read today's Bible verses, there's a lot about forgiveness. Take a few minutes to look over the verses and see if you can find these answers together.

## Think about It

**Question 1.** Why were Joseph's brothers afraid?

**Answer 1.** They were afraid Joseph would pay them back for the bad things they had done to him. (Genesis 50:15)

**Question 2.** What did their father tell them to say to Joseph?

**Answer 2.** "Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you." (Genesis 50:16)

**Question 3.** What did Joseph tell his brothers?

**Answer 3.** Not to be afraid of him (Genesis 50:19)

**Question 4.** What did God do with the brother's bad feelings and actions toward Joseph?

**Answer 4.** God turned it for good and positioned Joseph to save many people (Genesis 50:20)

**Question 5.** What did Joseph do for his brothers?

**Answer 5.** He took care of his brothers and their children (Genesis 50:21)

## Talk about It

- What did today's devotion make you think about?
- How does it feel when someone does something mean to you?
- Is it easy or hard to forgive?
- What is a time that you've forgiven someone?

## Pray about It

God, showing forgiveness isn't always easy. I don't want to carry around unforgiveness in my heart. Please help to forgive those who hurt me—not just say it but to really forgive them. Heal my heart of any hurts that I have. Amen.

# Day 2

## Faith Fact

God helps me forgive.

## Faith Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (NLT)

God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

## Question of the Day: Why should I forgive others?

## Read about It

**Read:** Matthew 18:21–35

Think about something you want a lot. Maybe you went to the store and saw the latest video game or craft kit, and you just had to have it! There's only one problem—you don't have enough money to buy it. So you go home and start doing chores and extra things around the house. Maybe you even ask some neighbors if they have anything you could do to earn some extra money. You work and work, but you still didn't have quite enough. So you ask your parents or grandparents if you can borrow some money, and they say yes.

Now you have exactly what you need and everything is awesome! Until you remember that you already owed them. Now you have worked for weeks and it feels like it will take you forever to pay them back. What would you do if they said, "You don't have to worry about it anymore. I'll forget about what you owe." You would probably be super excited! You'd hug them and be really grateful. Then something bad happens to the special thing that you worked so hard for. It gets broken or lost or stops working. How would you feel after how you had worked so hard for it?

In today's Bible reading, Jesus taught us about a man who forgot what it was like to have someone erase what he owed. Today we learned that we should forgive because God forgives us. When we choose not to forgive, God won't forgive us either. This is a great reminder that we should forgive others just as God forgives us. Pause together and look back at today's verses and see if you can find the answers to these questions.

## Think about It

**Question 1.** What question did Peter ask Jesus?

**Answer 1.** He wanted to know how many times to forgive someone (Matthew 18:21)

**Question 2.** How many times did Jesus say we should forgive?

**Answer 2.** Seventy times seven, which basically means many times. (Matthew 18:22)

**Question 3.** What did the king do to the man who couldn't pay back his debt?

**Answer 3.** He had pity for him, released him, and forgave his debt. (Matthew 18:27)

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**Question 4.** What did the man do to his fellow servant who owed him money?

**Answer 4.** He grabbed him by the throat and demanded he pay. When the fellow servant couldn't pay, he had him thrown jail. (Matthew 18:28–30)

**Question 5.** What happened when the king found out that the man didn't forgive his fellow servant?

**Answer 5.** The king became angry and threw the man in jail too. (Matthew 18:32–34)

### **Talk about It**

- What did today's devotion make you think about?
- Has someone ever forgiven you?
- How did that make you feel?
- How does it feel when someone won't forgive you?

### **Pray about It**

God, I want to be like You and show forgiveness to others. Help me to remember everything that You've done for me, and to love others as You do. Help me to forgive them when they are mean to me or hurt me, just like You have forgiven me. Amen.

# Day 3

## Faith Fact

God helps me forgive.

## Faith Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (NLT)

God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

## Question of the Day: How can I forgive?

## Read about It

**Read:** Matthew 5:23–26; 6:14; 18:15–17

Think back to the last time you saw an ambulance on its way to an emergency. You probably heard it before you ever saw it. Most likely you heard the siren and saw the flashing lights. The ambulance driver may have even been honking the horn as the ambulance made its way through an intersection. When the lights and sirens are going full blast, you know that means one thing—they are in a hurry. Everyone who learns to drive learns this important rule: When an ambulance, fire truck, or police car has its lights and sirens on, get out of the way. That means pull your car over to the side and clear a path for the emergency vehicle to get through.

Do you know why that's a law? It became a law to cut the time it takes emergency workers to get to the person who is in trouble.

Today in the verses we read, Jesus was talking about something that needed to be done quickly. He was talking about the importance of forgiving quickly. Jesus said that we can take the first step toward forgiving someone by going straight to the person and talking about the problem. Jesus knew that the longer we hold on to unforgiveness, the worse it gets for us. Take a look back at today's Bible reading, think about what you've read and answer these questions together.

## Think about It

**Question 1.** What should you do if you remember someone has done something bad to you, or you've done something to hurt them?

**Answer 1.** Go and be reconciled [make up with them]. (Matthew 5:23–24)

**Question 2.** Should you wait a long time to settle your problems?

**Answer 2.** No, you should do it quickly. (Matthew 5:25)

**Question 3.** If someone hurts your feelings, should you tell them?

**Answer 3.** Yes, you should go to them, try to talk about it and settle the problem. (Matthew 18:15)

**Question 4.** What if going to the other person one-on-one doesn't work?

**Answer 4.** The Bible tells us to try again and bring one or two others with us. (Matthew 18:16)

**Question 5.** What promise does God give us if we forgive others?

**Answer 5.** He will forgive us. (Matthew 6:14)

### **Talk about It**

- What did today's devotion make you think about?
- What does it feel like to hold on to unforgiveness?
- How did it feel when you finally forgive someone??

### **Pray about It**

God, thank You for teaching us how to forgive. Help me to always be quick to make things right when I've hurt someone and even quicker to forgive others. I don't want to hold on to unforgiveness ever again. Amen.

# Day 4

## Faith Fact

God helps me forgive.

## Faith Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (NLT)

God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

## Question of the Day: Does forgiveness help others?

## Read about It

**Read:** Luke 19:1–10

There is something really cool about a chameleon. You may have learned about these at school before, read about them in a book, or seen them at the zoo. They are lizards, but not just any kind of lizards. These are lizards that can change color. They can go from green, to brown, to a shade of pink. They can be dark or light in color. They are pretty amazing to see. They change color based on who they are around.

The same thing is true for us when it comes to forgiveness. The more time we spend with God and learn about how He has forgiven us, the more we become like Him and offer forgiveness to others.

In today's Bible reading, we read all about a man who was radically changed when Jesus came to visit him. After Zacchaeus came into contact with Jesus, his life changed. Jesus came to save people like Zacchaeus who had done wrong and needed forgiveness. We can help others who need forgiveness by telling them about Jesus. And when we offer forgiveness to others, it can also help them see a little bit of Jesus in us that could help them find Him. Take some time to reread today's Bible reading and answer these questions together.

## Think about It

**Question 1.** Who did Jesus meet in Jericho?

**Answer 1.** Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2)

**Question 2.** Why couldn't Zacchaeus see Jesus?

**Answer 2.** He was too short so he climbed a tree. (Luke 19:1–4)

**Question 3.** What did Jesus tell Zacchaeus to do?

**Answer 3.** To come down because Jesus was going to his house. (Luke 19:5)

**Question 4.** Why did people not like Zacchaeus?

**Answer 4.** Because they believed he was a sinner—a person who did wrong things. (Luke 19:7)

**Question 5.** What did Zacchaeus do after he spent time with Jesus?

**Answer 5.** He promised to give half of his wealth to the poor and pay back four times the amount if he had cheated anyone out of their own money. (Luke 19:8)

### **Talk about It**

- What did today's devotion make you think about forgiveness?
- How has your life changed because Jesus has forgiven you?
- Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive you for your sins?

### **Pray about It**

God, thank You for making a way for me to receive forgiveness. I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again. I believe He is preparing a place in heaven for me. Please forgive my sins and help me to forgive others too. I will do my very best to live for You. Amen.