

*Get Ready!*

## How Many Times?

By: Myra Montgomery

### Text

Matthew 18:21-35

### Key Quest Verse

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).

### Bible Background

Jesus uses this illustration to explain the concept of forgiveness. Jesus isn't teaching that we should keep track of the number of times someone does something to hurt us and then stop forgiving him when he has done it more than 490 times. He meant that we should always be willing to forgive, no matter how many times he does something to us.

*Get Ready!***Lesson Quest**

**What I want my students to:**

**Know:** To learn that to be forgiven we must forgive

**Feel:** To develop an attitude of forgiveness

**Do:** To express forgiveness or to make a promise to forgive

**Leader's Devotion**

“How many times should I forgive my brother?” asked Peter. “Seven times?”

“No,” said Jesus. “Not seven times, but seventy times seven.”

That’s a tall order. Real forgiveness is a gift from God and it doesn’t come easy. Insults and injuries and offenses damage pride, and only those who are able to face the pain of wounded pride are really able to forgive. And only those who dare to begin to approach those dark, hidden corners of their inner being, are able to face the pain of wounded pride.

It’s difficult business, forgiveness. It’s much easier to totally blame somebody else for all problems than it is to accept that I myself might bear some responsibility. And taking that first step of approaching the other party, whether I’m the offender or offended against, is very difficult indeed.

Sometimes people are precipitated into forgiveness, but that usually takes a major, earth-shattering event, like a sudden death, or a life-threatening illness. That sort of event changes priorities, and wounded pride is suddenly seen for what it really is.

Yet forgiveness is at the heart of the Christian faith, and without it Christianity is just a hollow sham. “Forgive us our sins,” we say to God, “as we forgive those who sin against us.” Forgive us Lord, in the same measure that we forgive other people.

Get Set!

Option A



Materials: Light bulb

**Procedure:** I want to tell you a story about how Thomas Edison was working to invent the light bulb. A team of several men had spent twenty-four hours putting one together to test. The story is told that when Edison was finished with it he gave it to a young boy who was helping and sent him to carry it up the stairs. Naturally the boy was nervous. Step by step he walked, with fear and trembling in his heart, to the second floor. You probably already guessed what happened. As he reached the top step he tripped and dropped the bulb which shattered into thousands of tiny pieces. It took the team of men another twenty-four hours to make a new one. When Edison was ready to send it upstairs, he gave it to the same boy who had dropped the first one. That, is forgiveness. God is like that with us. He knows we will sometimes make mistakes, but He always will give us another chance! How many chances or times are we supposed to forgive others? Let's take a look in our Bibles and see what it says!

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B



Materials: A can of carbonated beverage

**Procedure:** (Have students stand in a small circle) I want you to be thinking about ways people hurt other people. I am going to gently toss this canned drink to you and then I want you to throw it to another person and say some way that we can hurt others. (leaving someone out, yelling at them, telling them a lie, disrespect, ignoring, etc.) Give everyone a turn. **What happens if we let all this anger build up?** (open up can over a garbage can) **We start to explode, just like this can!** We need to learn to forgive so that anger doesn't build up! Let's go to our Bible and see what it has to say about forgiveness.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

**Get Set!****Bible Story**

**Teacher Tip:** Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

**Materials:** Play money, flannel graph figures: king, 2 servants (optional)

Once Peter asked Jesus, “Lord, how often should I forgive somebody who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “No, seventy times seven.” Then Jesus told a parable to explain forgiveness. What is a parable? (A comparison, where things in the story represent or stand for other things.) For example, the king in this parable represents someone else.

One day a king called his servants to come before him and pay their debts, and one servant was brought who owed the king 10 million dollars. (Put a large stack of play money on the table.) But the servant didn’t have the money to pay the king back, so the king commanded that he be sold into slavery, along with his wife and children and everything he owned, so the money could be paid back to the king. Then the servant fell on his knees before the king and begged, “Please be patient with me and I will pay it all back!” So the king felt pity for him and cancelled all the debt and let him go.

Then that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him only 10 dollars. (Count out \$10 of the money on the table.) He grabbed him by the throat and began to choke him, shouting, “Pay back what you owe me!” His fellow servant fell to the ground and begged, “Please be patient with me and I will pay it back!” But he refused. Instead he threw his fellow servant in prison until he could pay back the \$10.

When the other servants saw what happened, they were very upset and went and told the king everything. Then the king called the servant before him. “You wicked servant,” he said, “I cancelled all the debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?” In anger the king turned him over to the jailers until he could pay back all he owed. Jesus said, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive each other from your heart.”

(Bible Story by Sarah Buzzard)

**Go!****Forgiveness Times Seven****MATH GAME****Materials:** Pencils, paper**Quest Connection**

Read Luke 23:34. Can you believe that Jesus could still forgive even as He was dying on the cross? Some of the hardest words we will ever say to someone is “I’m sorry!” or “Please forgive me!” But sometimes it is even harder to say, “Yes, I forgive you!” It is difficult not to carry a grudge against someone. Let’s look again at Matthew 18:21. How many times are we supposed to forgive someone? Get your paper and pencil ready and try this.

**Procedure:** Listen carefully and figure this out on your paper.

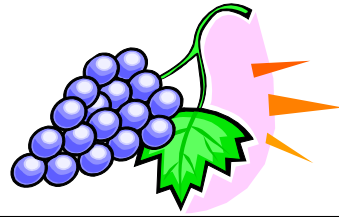
1. Choose a number from 1-10 and write it on your paper.
2. Add 6 to it.
3. Now take 4 away from the number you now have.
4. Add 5 more to it.
5. Take away the number you started with.
6. Your answer is 7 right?

No matter what number you start with, you should always end up with seven!

**Close**

Jesus was helping His disciples to understand that even when people have done us wrong and treated us badly, we are still to forgive them over and over again. Not just seven times, but as often as we need to do so!

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**Go!**

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**Grapes of Wrath****DRAMA/VIDEO**

**Materials:** Veggie Tale video - “God Wants Me to Forgive Them?”, television, VCR

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**Quest Connection**

**In our story Jesus told about two men, one who forgave and one who didn’t. We’re going to see another story about forgiveness.**

**Procedure:** Watch the first half of the video through the end of the Grapes of Wrath portion.

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**Close**

**How did Junior feel when the grapes made fun of him? How did he feel about forgiving them over and over again? Have you ever been like one of the grapes and said something to hurt someone else? When we do, we need to ask for forgiveness. Take a minute to think about if there is anyone you need to ask for forgiveness. Be sure to do it as soon as you can.**

**Go!****Cracked Up!****FOOD****Materials:** Two eggs, bowl**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** Can anyone break this egg into this bowl for me? (Have a student crack the egg, open and put it in the bowl.) OK, now put it back in its shell. (act surprised) What do you mean you can't do it? This reminds me of when we hurt others. Once we do or say something to someone that we wished we hadn't, it is so hard to put it back!. I am sure we have all experienced a time when someone has said something to us and it is hard for us to forget it! Not being able to forgive others can really make a mess of things, just like these eggs!

**Close**

The message of our lesson was to forgive others how many times? (seven times seventy) We have to always find forgiveness in our hearts for others. What are some ways we can let others know that we have forgiven them?

**Go!****Tool Kit****OBJECT LESSON**

**Materials:** For each student one of each: ziploc bag , toothpick, rubber band, Band Aid, pencil, eraser, chewing gum, mint, candy kiss, a copy for each student from the Teacher Resource, “Get Along Tool Kit”

**Quest Connection**

**Do you often find it difficult to get along with certain people? I know that even adults have that problem. We are going to make a toolbox. In this toolbox, we are going to put different objects in it as a reminder of things we can do to get along with others!**

**Procedure:** Hand out the descriptions of the objects to the students. Give them each a plastic bag. Read each reminder for each object as you hand them out to the students. Ask them to explain to you why each reminder is important or to give an example. Read together in unison Ephesians 4:32.

**Close**

**I would like for you to take this toolbox and put it somewhere that you will be able to see it often. Maybe you have a bulletin board at home where you could hang it. Let it be a reminder about forgiving others!**



**Go!**



### I'm Not Perfect!

#### ARTS AND CRAFTS

**Materials:** A handwritten bumper sticker that says, "I'M NOT PERFECT. . . JUST FORGIVEN!"  
Poster board that's cut the size of a bumper sticker (one for each student), markers,  
optional: magnet strips or tape

### Quest Connection

Have you ever seen a bumper sticker on a car? They usually have short messages on them. Once I saw one that read, "I'm not perfect, just forgiven." Even though we sin or offend others at times, we can be glad that God forgives us when we turn away from our sin. Here is another bumper sticker like that one, but it is slightly different. [Show sticker.] It reads, "I'm not perfect, just forgiving." The difference here is it explains our forgiveness in how we forgive others.

Jesus tells us to forgive others when we pray. He says that if we are holding a grudge to let it go. God knows how to give our hearts true peace and that is better than peace of mind. If we hold on to our anger (or hold a grudge) toward another person it burns within us and harms us. It is only by letting go and forgiving that person that we are ready to accept God's forgiveness for our own wrongdoing.

**Procedure:** Let's practice forgiving others right now. Ball up your hands into a fist and hold them in front of you. Now think of something that someone did to you that hurt your feelings and made you mad. Imagine that you are holding that thought in your fist. Do you see how that looks? It seems as if you are ready to fight.

Now keep holding it for a moment. Close your eyes and bow your head. I'm going to pray and ask you to join me. Let us pray. Repeat after me: "Lord, forgive them." [repeat] Okay, now open your hands and let go of that thought as you forgive that person. Now repeat after me, "Lord I'm sorry for hurting others. Please forgive me." [repeat] Thank you Jesus for loving us and forgiving us. Help us to forgive others. Amen

Now open your eyes and look at your open hands. Since you let go of your grudge and forgave that person, now your hand is empty and ready to receive God's forgiveness.

**Go!**

Pass out strips of cardboard to students. **I want you to write “I’m Not Perfect, Just Forgiven! Ephesians 4:32” on this strip of cardboard and then decorate it with these markers. Find a place to hang it in your home as a reminder of our lesson today!** (It might be helpful for you to write the words on a chalkboard or piece of paper.)

**Close**

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**How do we forgive others? Remember to forgive others when you pray. How many times did Jesus tell us that we need to forgive others? (seven times seventy)  
Try to remember how important this is in your life. You will be much happier!**

**Go!****Tug and Hugs****GAME**

**Materials:** Bible, masking tape, a long rope, handkerchief or piece of cloth

**Quest Connection**

We are going to play a game that reminds us of the importance of getting along!

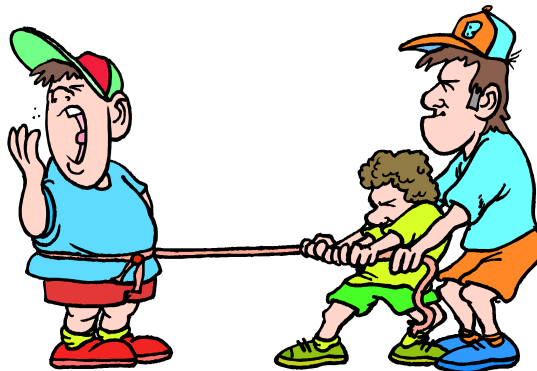
**Procedure:** Tie the handkerchief to the middle point of the rope. Place two pieces of masking tape on the floor about a yard apart. Lay the rope across the masking tape so that the cloth is in the middle of the two pieces of tape. Form two teams. **Let's play Tug of War in many different ways! We are not going to worry about winning or losing in this game, because we'll switch teams many times and we will switch ways of tugging!**

Have teams sit on the ground. Have each child hold one hand on the rope and the other hand on his or her head. At your signal, children will pull with only one hand. When a team has pulled the handkerchief on the rope past a piece of tape, have everyone applaud!

Randomly and frequently, have team members switch places. Add variety by adding rounds in which they just pull with their thumbs and forefingers, their toes, or their pinkies.

**Close**

Would we have been able to play this game if we were holding grudges and not getting along? What do we need to do to get rid of grudges? (forgive others) Who remembers our Key Verse? It is difficult to have teamwork with someone when you haven't forgiven them!



# Get Along Toolbox

- 1) Toothpick - to remind you to pick out the good qualities in others
- 2) Rubber Band - to remind you to be flexible, things might not always go the way you want, but it will work out
- 3) Band Aid - to remind you to heal hurt feelings, yours or someone else's
- 4) Pencil - to remind you to list your blessings everyday
- 5) Eraser -To remind you that everyone makes mistakes, and it's OK
- 6) Chewing gum - to remind you to stick with it, friendships are worth it
- 7) Mint - to remind you that you are worth a mint to your heavenly Father
- 8) Candy Kiss - to remind you that everyone needs a kiss or a hug everyday

**EPHESIANS 4:32**

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**EPHESIANS 4:32**

# Forgiving Makes Hurts Feel Better!

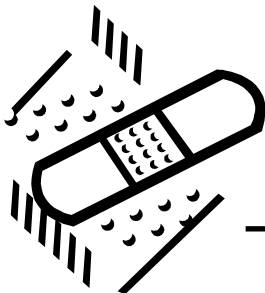
Look up the following verses and write a short sentence on what it says about forgiveness!

## Colossians 3:13



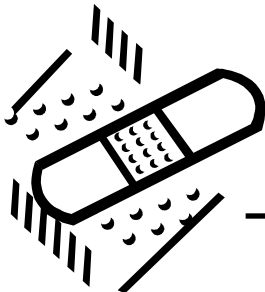
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## Matthew 18:21-35



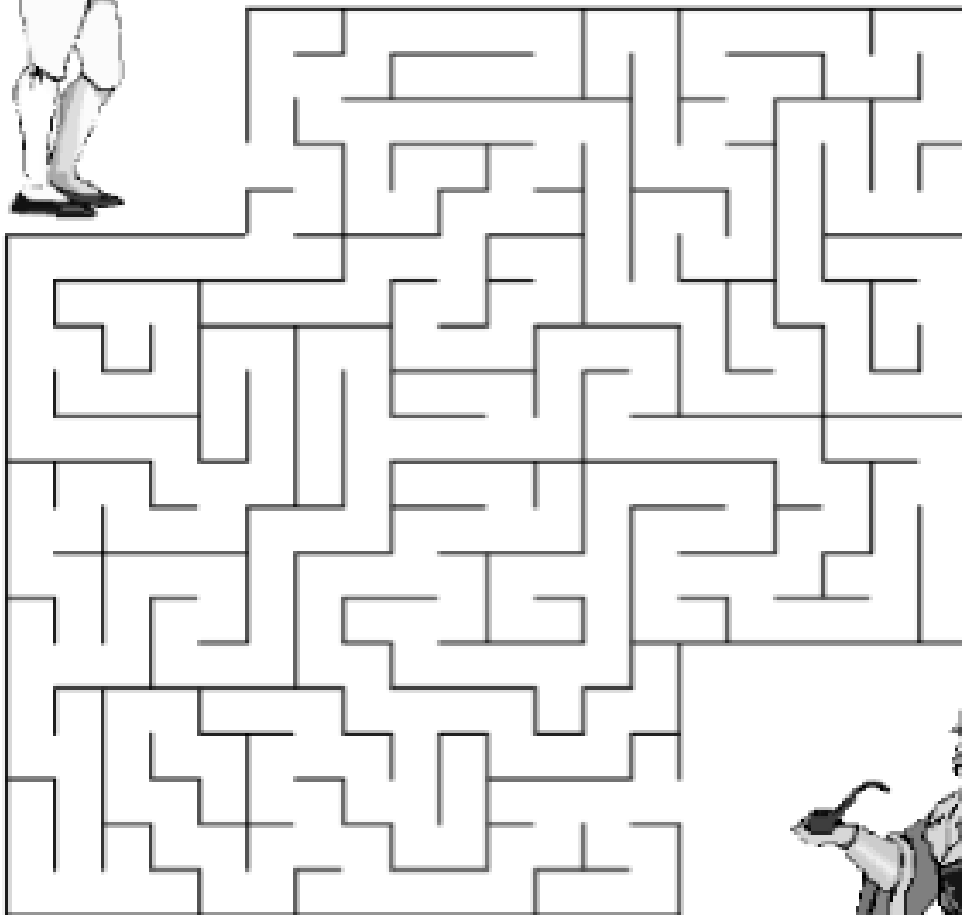
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## Ephesians 4:32



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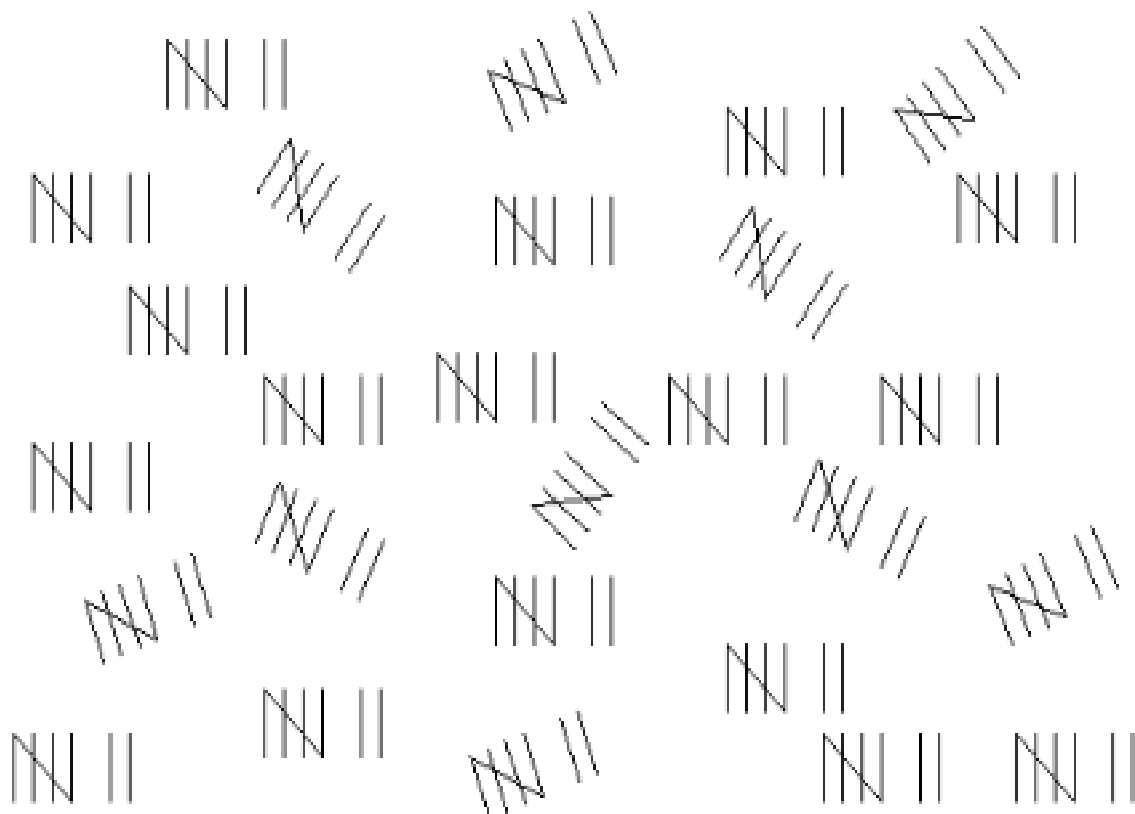
# HELP THE SERVANT FIND HIS MASTER

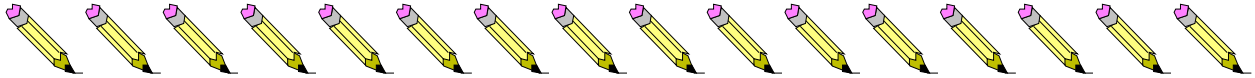


# SOLVE THE PUZZLE BELOW TO FIND OUT WHAT JESUS TAUGHT US ABOUT FORGIVENESS

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
																		22							

S			S			S			S														
7	16	22	10	22	22	4	21	11	13	16	22	23	9	10	3	11	20	9	15	6	21	17	16
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## Forgive and Forget



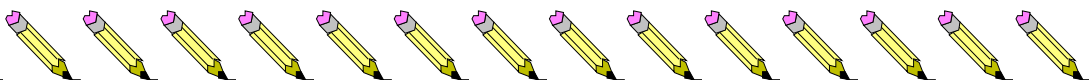
Write what will happen next:



Your best friend said that he would pick you to be on his soccer team in gym class. Instead he picks the better players and you get picked last. He can tell you feel bad...



Your Mom has had a really bad day. She comes home and yells at you for no real reason. Later she apologizes and you...





**Cut apart the boxes and mix them up. Put the verse back in the correct order! Challenge a friend to a race!**

<b>Be</b>	<b>kind</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>another</b>
<b>tender- hearted</b>	<b>forgiving</b>	<b>each</b>	<b>other</b>
<b>just</b>	<b>as</b>	<b>God</b>	<b>in</b>
<b>Christ</b>	<b>has</b>	<b>forgiven</b>	<b>you! Ephesians 4:32</b>