

# Please Forgive Me

**Bible Story:** Please Forgive Me (Lost Son) • *Luke 15:11-24*

**Key Question:** When has someone forgiven you?

**Bottom Line:** Everyone needs to be forgiven.

**Memory Verse:** *Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you.* Colossians 3:13, NIV

**Life App:** Forgiveness—Deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

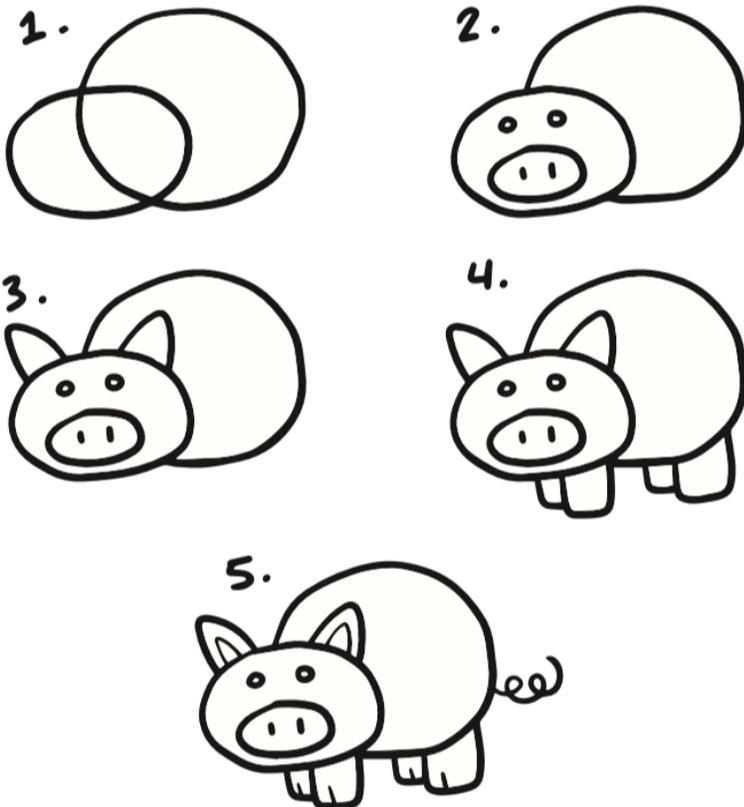
## Just for Fun

*Made to play: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:** markers, paper, "Draw a Pig Directions" Activity Page, bandana or eye mask

### What You Do:

- Using the instructions, practice drawing a pig.
- Now, turn your paper over, blind fold yourself (or close your eyes) and try again!



## Just for Fun

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### Get Your Head in the Game

*Made to Move: An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body*

#### What You Need: Basket, a toy pig

- Basket or container
  - The container needs to be large enough to be used for a basketball type game where kids will “shoot” the toy pig into it.
- Toy pig
  - The toy pig could be: a stuffed animal, a ball with a pig face drawn on it, pig beach ball, pig stress ball, etc. Kids will use the toy pig in a basketball-type game, so it can't be fragile.

#### What You Do:

- **Set** up a basket in the room for a basketball-type game. If you want to be able to make “backboard” shots, set the basket next to a wall.
- **Explain** the game will be played like a basketball game similar to HORSE except it is called PIG, and instead of a basketball, kids will be using a pig.
- **To play:**
  - Kids take turns trying to get the pig into the basket.
  - Once a kid makes a basket, everyone in the group must duplicate the same shot, standing in the same spot with the same form.
  - Anyone who misses gets a “P.”
    - For example: if a kid closes his eyes and shoots with his left hand and the pig lands in the basket, then everyone in the group must close their eyes and shoot with their left hand. Anyone who misses the basket gets a “P.”
  - Kids continue to try to make a basket.
  - **Encourage** them to be silly and go for the “trick” shots.
  - Every time a kid misses a shot, he or she will receive another letter spelling the word “PIG.”
  - The last kid to spell “PIG” wins.

#### What You Say:

“We are going to have some fun together before we dig into God’s Word. Let’s put a spin on an old favorite. Today we are going to play PIG. It’s similar to HORSE, but instead of a basketball we will use a PIG.”

## **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 25 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

### **1. Take a Snapshot**

#### **[Talk about God | Application Activity]**

*Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** Uninflated balloons, thin markers or pens, basket

#### **What You Do:**

- **Encourage** kids to think of examples of things people do that “wrong each other,” things that might need forgiveness.
  - Examples could include: say mean things, cheat on tests, lie, say things about other people we shouldn’t, get angry when we don’t get our way, exclude people, forget to do what we say we will, lose our temper, etc.
- **Give** each kid an uninflated balloon and **tell** them to write 1-3 examples on the uninflated balloons.
  - This might be a bit challenging, so **suggest** kids pick out a key word for each example, such as: lie, gossip, anger, mean, ignore, etc.
- **Tell** kids to blow up their balloons and **knot** the stems.
- **Encourage** kids to share their examples with the group.
- **Discuss** the examples.
- **Direct** kids to shoot their balloons into the basket to be used during the Verses to Take with You Activity.

## 2. Bible Story Extension

### [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

*Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment*

**What You Need:** “Scene Cards” Activity Pages, butcher paper, markers

#### What You Do:

- **Gather** group around the large piece of paper.
- **Allow** kids to pick a “Scene Card” (next page). *Tip: If you are not printing, you can read the ‘scene card’ page and assign everyone a scene.*
- **Encourage** each person to draw something on the paper that represents the scene.
- As a group, **retell** the story using the pictures kids drew. Make sure everyone’s picture is included in the story line.
- **Ask:** *Tip: Consider asking the questions while kids are drawing.*
  - The story of the father and his two sons is called a parable. What’s a parable? *(a parable is a story used to teach something, Jesus frequently told parables to make His point)*
  - How can we sometimes be like the younger son?
  - How is the father like God?
  - What is Jesus teaching us about God’s forgiveness in this parable?
  - **Facilitate** discussion so the group has the opportunity to tell the story of God’s forgiveness.
    - Just like the younger son did things that kept him from having a relationship with his father, we do things that keeps us from having a relationship with God.
    - God sent Jesus to make a way for to fix our relationship with God so we have God’s forgiveness and we can be with Him now and forever.
  - **Emphasize** that God’s forgiveness is for everyone and God doesn’t hold a grudge.

*A father has two sons.*

*The younger son demanded his share of the family's wealth and his father gave it all to him.*

*The younger son packed up and moved away.*

*The younger son spent all his money and had no more to buy food.*

*The younger son had to get a job feeding pigs.*

*The younger son knew he made a mistake and headed home to ask for forgiveness. But before he even got home, his father saw him in the distance.*

*The father asked for a robe, ring, and sandals for his younger son because he was lost and now was found.*

*The father forgave the younger son and had a party to celebrate his return home.*

### 3. Discussion Questions

#### [Live for God | Application Activity]

*Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

#### What You Do:

##### Ask:

- What is one way you respond when you've done something wrong?
- When has someone forgiven you? **Encourage** kids to share examples and talk about how it felt to be forgiven.
- What about when you've forgiven someone else? How do you think they felt?
  - **Encourage** kids to share.
  - **[Make it Personal]**

***Be prepared to share an age-appropriate example of when someone forgave you. Maybe you forgot to meet your friend for lunch like you said you would and your friend didn't hold it against you and simply rescheduled another time to get together. Or you borrowed a tool from a friend and it broke, but your friend didn't make you buy a new one to replace it.***

#### 4. Verse to Take with You

##### [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

*Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** a wall in the environment labeled “EAST” and a wall labeled “WEST,” two containers or baskets, balloons from the *Take a Snapshot Activity*, Bibles, Index card or piece of paper, markers or pencils

*Tip: If not printing, 4GVN Cards are simply assigned Scripture verses to look up.*

##### What You Do:

- **Look up** and **read** Psalm 103:8-12 together.
- **Ask:**
  - What does this passage tell us about God? (*He is tender, kind, gracious, patient, etc.*)
  - What does this passage say about God’s forgiveness? (*God forgives us and doesn’t hold a grudge, He removes our sin*)
- **Give** kids a blank paper or index card. Write: 4GVN on the card or paper.
- **Ask:** What does this card say? (*Forgiven*)
- **Remind** kids because of Jesus, God’s forgiveness is for everyone; because of Jesus we are forgiven.
- On the “4GVN Card,” **encourage** kids to paraphrase what Psalm 103:8-12 says about God and His forgiveness.
- **Spend** time sharing what kids wrote about Psalm 103.
- **Place** the containers on two opposite ends of the room; one by the “EAST” wall and one by the “WEST” wall.
- **Divide** the group into two teams.
- **Instruct** teams to stand midway between the two containers.
- **Divide** the balloons from the “Take a Snapshot” Activity between the two teams.

*Continued....*

- **Explain** that teams will race to put their balloons in the containers first.
- **To race:**
  - When you **say** “GO,” a kid from each team will race to put a balloon in the EAST container and return to their teams.
  - The next kid from each team then races to put a balloon in the WEST container and returns to his or her team.
  - Kids continue putting balloons in alternating containers.
  - The first team to have moved all their balloons to the EAST and WEST wins.
  - For an extra challenge: to transport the balloons, kids must keep the balloons from touching the ground, but they can’t simply hold the balloons—they have to keep them in the air and bat them around toward the goals.

## 5. Make it Personal with Prayer

### [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

*Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application*

**What You Need:** “4GVN Cards” from Verses to Take with You, Bibles, pencils or markers, paper

#### What You Do:

- **Give** kids some quiet time to pray.
  
- **Suggest** options for ways to spend this prayer time:
  - Talking silently to God
  - On your “4GVN Card,” write God a thank You note
  - Reading Psalm 103:8-12 as a prayer to God
  - Write a prayer with each sentence starting with a letter in the word “FORGIVE.”
  - Draw something to represent your prayer
  
- **Allow** kids to share their prayers with the group if they want to.