

# Forgiveness



Learning & Growing  
**STEPS**  
Learning & Growing





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It is only the forgiving who can receive forgiveness.

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# Forgiving Bobby

Bobby was an orphan boy, because both his parents had died. He traveled around visiting his aunts and uncles and other relatives, but he was sad because he felt that no one really loved him and he didn't know Jesus. He would also often do mean and ugly things to others. However, one day Bobby became a different boy because his cousin, Mary, showed him some real love and kindness. This is the story of Bobby, and how he changed:

Nine-year-old Bobby stepped off the train. It had been a long trip. He had come to visit his aunt and uncle. Finding no familiar face to greet him, he sat down and waited on the bench beside the depot\*. "Guess they're not too excited to see me," he thought to himself.

Just then Uncle Tom spotted him, and he and Aunt Sara came hurrying to greet him.

"Hello there, Bobby! Sorry to be late. The car's over this way. Let's go!" Uncle Tom reached down for his belongings, and soon they were laughing and chatting on the way home to the farm.

Bobby managed to mind his manners and behave for the rest of the day. However, the next morning, he rolled out of bed late and in a bit of a bad mood. Bobby wasn't in the habit of praying and talking to Jesus when he first woke up. Instead Bobby gave place to naughty and mean thoughts.—And things just don't go right when we don't start our day with the Lord.

Mary woke up early and she took some quiet time to talk with Jesus. Mother then said she could play outside for awhile, so Mary arranged her toys in a little playhouse, near the kitchen, by the bushes. She was rocking her doll to sleep and singing a lullaby when Bobby passed by. He slipped behind the bushes to watch her.

Bobby went and kicked over the prettily set table and knocked the dishes to the ground in many pieces. Next he grabbed the doll rudely from the Mary's arms, and threw it high up into the bushes. This made Mary so upset that she started crying and disappeared into the house.

Aunt Sarah was very upset when she heard Mary's story of what Bobby had done. She rushed out to see what had happened, and to find Bobby.

"Bobby! B-O-B-B-Y!" No answer came to her insistent calling, and after a few minutes she and Mary returned to the house.

When Uncle Tom came home, they told him what had happened that day, and Uncle Tom went to find Bobby. He found him hiding in the shed because he was afraid of what might happen to him, as he knew he had acted very wrongly. If only he had said he was truly sorry about the things he had done, he would have been forgiven.

"Will you come with me and tell Mary you are sorry?" Uncle Tom asked him, giving him a chance to make things right again.

"No," Bobby answered stubbornly. "I'm not sorry, and I'm going to stay right here in the shed."

"Oh," Uncle Tom said. "I'm sorry to hear that. We're going to be having dinner now, and we hope you'll apologize and come join us soon."

Meanwhile, Aunt Sara had made the tastiest dinner she knew how to cook. Mary sat down eagerly and filled her plate like a hungry girl would. All of a sudden she noticed that Bobby's plate was empty, and asked, "Why, where is Bobby?"

"Bobby is still out in the shed. He wasn't sorry about the way he treated you this morning and didn't want to come in."

"Oh," replied Mary. Gradually her dinner looked less and less inviting. A big lump gathered in her throat, and finally she stopped eating. "Mother," she asked, "could I take Bobby some dinner and talk to him a little?"

Father and Mother looked at each other, and after a long silence Father said, "That's very good of you, Dear, but he doesn't deserve it."

"I know he doesn't, but may I?" she asked earnestly.



"All right, Mary, if you really want to."

Mary went outside with a plate of food for Bobby. "Bobby, I brought you some food," she called softly.

Bobby looked at Mary in a surprised way. "I thought you might be hungry," she added.

"But, I was so mean to you!" Bobby exclaimed. "Aren't you upset with me?"

"Well," said Mary, "I was at first, but then I remembered how I have done lots of wrong things, too, and Jesus forgives me for all of them when I ask Him to."

"Really?" said Bobby. "Jesus must really love you."

"Yes!" said Mary. "And Jesus loves you too, and wants to make you happy."

"Oh," said Bobby, as he thought about that for a little while. "I really do want to be happy," he admitted. "It would be nice to feel like someone loves me. Do you really think Jesus would love me and forgive me, too? Even though I've been so bad?"

"Of course He would!" said Mary. "The Bible says, 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins' (1 John 1:9). That means that if we tell Him we are sorry, He won't be upset with us, but will forgive us and love us anyway."

Bobby then said shyly, "Mary, I'm really sorry for being so mean and rough and unloving to you this morning. Will you please forgive me?"

"Of course I'll forgive you, Bobby," said Mary. "Come on now! Bring your dinner and let's go tell Father."

"I've apologized to Mary," Bobby told Uncle Tom, "and I'm really sorry for acting the way I did to you."

"God bless you, Son, and I forgive you," said Uncle Tom, as he gave him a big hug. "Now we can all enjoy this delicious dinner together."

Bobby then told them how Mary's being willing to reach out and show some real love and forgiveness had helped him to understand how Jesus loved him. Because of Mary's love and forgiveness, Bobby became a loving and kind boy too! And instead of his heart being filled with anger, bitterness, and sadness, Jesus filled his heart with joy.

As Bobby read and studied the Bible, he learned more about the Lord's great love for him and how Jesus wants us to show His love to others.

A few days later Uncle Tom and Aunt Sara talked with Mary and they decided that they would like to have Bobby live with them and be their boy. Bobby was glad about this too. He was so thankful for the real love that they showed to him.



- What helped Bobby feel sorry for his wrongdoings?
- How did Mary's forgiveness change Bobby's life?
- Do you sometimes find it hard to forgive those who have wronged you?
- Talk about some times that you found it hard to forgive, and then discuss how forgiving made things turn out better.
- Always remember that you also do wrong things sometimes and want to be forgiven. Jesus always loves us and He forgives us, if we are sorry.

# A New Page

He came to my desk with quivering lip,  
The lesson was done.  
“Dear Teacher, I want a new page,” he said,  
“I have spoiled this one.”  
I took the old page, stained and blotted,  
And gave him a new one, all unspotted,  
And into his sad eyes smiled:  
“Do better now, my child!”

I went to the Throne with a quivering soul,  
The old year was done.  
“Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?  
I have spoiled this one.”  
He took the old leaf, stained and blotted,  
And gave me a new one, all unspotted,  
And into my sad heart smiled:  
“Do better now, My child!”



# The Dishonest Neighbor

"Here you go, Mr. Sims. 30, 40, 50 dollars. Please deliver it to this address and place it in the coal bin, would you?" my father said as he paid for a ton of coal.

"Yes, sir. You'll have your coal tomorrow afternoon," the coal dealer said with a twisted smile and a sneaky look that made my father question his honesty.

The next day I came home after the coal was delivered and went to the coal bin to take a look. I could immediately tell that it was only half a ton of coal because it was only half way to the ton mark line. When my father came home, I told him about it.

"Father, Mr. Sims put only a half ton of coal in our bin."

"Thank you for telling me, Son, but please let's just keep this between you and me, okay?"

"But Dad!" I protested.

"I don't want to talk any more about it," said Father.

"Yes sir," I said reluctantly.

I forgot about the matter until a few weeks later when I was surprised to see Mr. Sims, his wife, and three children at our door. My father announced to us, "Mr. Sims' family will be staying with us until they can find a new place. You won't mind letting him use your room for a little while, will you son?"

"But Dad..." I complained.

"I'm sorry, I did not explain their situation first. They have lost their house and all their belongings in a fire."

"Well, in that case... I guess so," I grumbled.

The "little while" that my Father sheltered Mr. Sims' family under our roof stretched into what seemed like forever to me. I really resented having to sleep in the barn loft while the dishonest neighbor and his family rested on my bed.

My opinion of Mr. Sims changed one morning, however, when I heard him talking to Father in the shed below. I crept closer and spied on them through a crack in the boards.

Mr. Sims was talking softly with his head hung low, "You have been kind to me, and a while back I cheated you out of a half a ton of coal."

"I know. My son told me it was only half a ton."

"You know? Why... how could you take me into your house and be so kind to me?"

"It is not any goodness of my own. It is only the love of Christ in me."

Mr. Sims sobbed out, "Can you forgive me?"

"I have. He has taught us in His Word that if we do not forgive men their mistakes, He cannot forgive us of ours. I used to cheat people too, until I became a Christian." (Mark 11:25,26.)

That was something I heard for the first time.

Mr. Sims and my father knelt and prayed, and the man gave himself to Christ that morning in the barn. He never cheated anyone again.



- Do you think the Father's kindness toward Mr. Sims made him into a better, more honest man? Explain why.
- Talk about how things may have turned out if Father had been very angry and unforgiving.
- Can you give an example of a time when you had to forgive someone for something they did to you?
- Have you ever asked anyone to forgive you for something you did wrong to them? How did they react, and how did it make you feel?
- How can forgiveness sometimes teach us to do the right thing more than harsh justice?





# The Light Bulb

Thomas Edison was jumping up and down for joy, "At last, after hundreds of failures, I have done it! The first electric light bulb! Thank God! I have been dreaming of this moment for years!" Edison looked around his room for a place to put his precious new discovery, but the table was too crowded. He would have to take it upstairs. "Jimmy! Jimmy Price!" He waited a few moments, but there was no answer. He was getting tired of holding the light bulb, "Now where has that assistant of mine gone to?"

Just then young Jimmy came in huffing and puffing, "Yes sir, may I help you?"

Edison handed the light bulb tenderly to Jimmy, as if it were his new baby. "Take this precious light bulb upstairs and set it carefully in the large storage container."

Jimmy took it and said confidently, "Of course. I'd be happy to!"

Jimmy ran quickly up the stairs. He knew it was quitting time and wanted to go home soon so he could play ball with his friends.

Just then there was a sickening sound of shattering glass. Edison bent over his creation in despair, "My precious bulb!"

Jimmy tried to make the best of the situation. He hoped that he would not lose his job. It was not easy for a young boy to find work. "Sorry, sir, it... it just slipped through my fingers!"

Edison was quiet for a few minutes. You can imagine what he was thinking—all those years of hard work shattered and lying in a pile on the floor. "Well, son," he said softly, "these things happen. Go on home, Jimmy. I'll see you in the morning."

That night Edison began work on another light bulb. The work was difficult, as he had only recently made this discovery. After many days and much hard work, Edison had finally completed his second light bulb.

"At last, the second bulb is ready!" He shouted for joy.

Just then the door opened and Jimmy came in sheepishly, "Good morning, Mr. Edison."

Edison tried to be cheerful, even though he had not slept at all the night before. "Good morning, Jimmy," he said with a smile. Then Edison did a very big thing—as a sign that he had forgiven Jimmy for breaking the first bulb. With a smile, he handed the new bulb to Jimmy. "Will you please take this upstairs, Jimmy? Careful now!" he said. He was giving the boy another chance.

Jimmy was surprised, but took the bulb. "Yes, sir." After taking a few steps up the stairs, he turned to look at Edison's kind face and said, "And, sir,"

Edison responded, "Yes, Jimmy?"

"Thank you for forgiving me and giving me another chance. I won't let you down again," Jimmy said gratefully.

Jimmy did not break that bulb—and so we have millions of them in the world today.

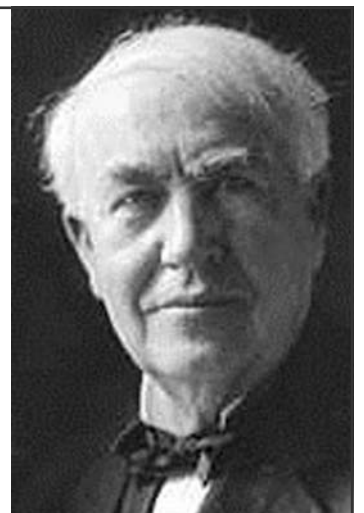


- Was it easy for Edison to forgive Jimmy for what he had done?
- How do you think Jimmy felt when Edison handed him the precious light bulb a second time?
- If you were Jimmy, how would you have felt about Edison after this great act of forgiveness?
- Have you ever been forgiven for something that you did wrong?

## Thomas Alva Edison

1847-1931

American inventor who made more than a thousand inventions, among them the microphone (1877), the phonograph (1878), and the light bulb (1879). In New York City he installed the world's first central electric power plant (1881-1882).







# Let It Pass

Don't stoop, my friend, to answer back,  
Why not just let it pass?  
You'll find this giving word for word  
Will never pay, alas.  
Though 'tis true of human nature  
This giving tit for tat,  
Yet truly great folks have found  
A better way than that.  
And though it seems impossible  
It's better in the end  
To let them have their way, and then  
Just LET IT PASS, my friend.

I know sometimes it's very hard  
And seems it can't be done,  
But if you'll learn this better way  
A victory will be won;  
For you will save what's so worthwhile—  
Both time and feelings, too,  
When you ignore what has been said,  
Don't try to argue through.  
For then you'll know without a doubt  
'Twas better in the end,  
To let them have their way, and then  
Just LET IT PASS, my friend.





Now some folks always answer back,  
They never hold their peace;  
In trying to defend themselves  
It seems they never cease;  
Giving vent to every feeling,  
Whatever's on the mind  
Regardless of the consequence,  
Then, after all, to find  
It didn't pay and would have been  
Much better in the end  
To have borne it all in silence  
And LET IT PASS, my friend.

For truly great folks never stoop  
To answer petty things;  
The unkind word, the bitter cut  
That rankles\* deep and stings.  
They are too big to notice them,  
They simply pass them by,  
And even with a smile sometimes  
Or twinkle in the eye.

For they have found that after all  
'Twas better in the end  
To meet it with a smile, and then  
Just LET IT PASS, my friend.



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\***rankle**: to cause persistent irritation or resentment

# Prayer and Praise

Thank You, dear Jesus, for forgiving all my sins. Please help me to forgive others, just like I want to be forgiven too. I love You, Jesus. Amen.

# Memory Fun



If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Matthew 6:14

# Pencil Page

## Unscramble the Words



Unscramble the letters to find out the children's prayer! Start by unscrambling word number 1, and place the word on the dotted line below.

1. grifove

4. yaw

2. hace

5. slevoures

3. torhe

6. twan

Help us to \_\_\_\_\_  
1

\_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_  
2 3 4

we \_\_\_\_\_  
5 6

to be forgiven.



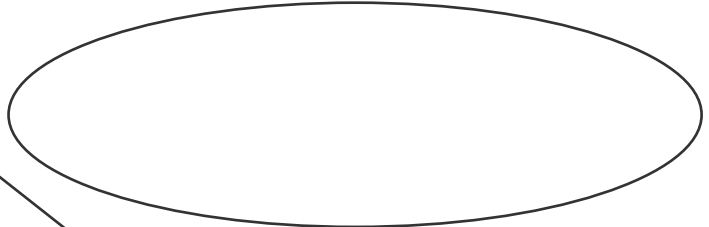
# Pencil Page

## Words and Shapes

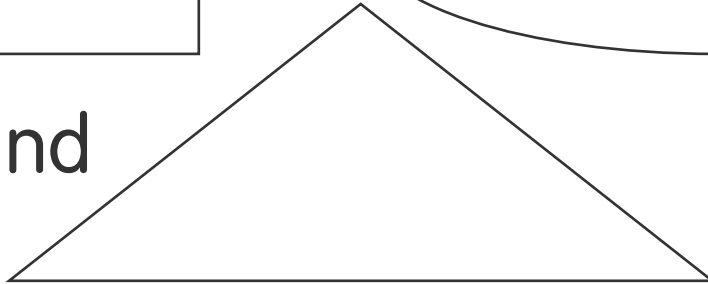
Fill in the missing words below by matching the shapes and writing in the correct words.



is



and



forgiveness

Love

mercy.



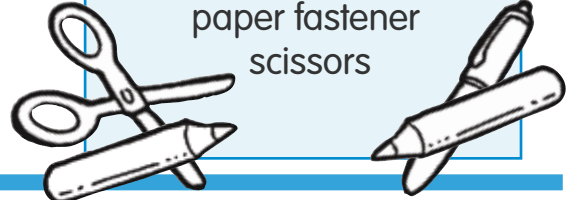
# Make and Do

## Forgiveness Flower

### How to:

- Color the hearts below and mount them on card paper.
- Cut the hearts out and fasten them together using a paper fastener, as shown in the picture.
- Use this heart to remind you of the verses on forgiveness!

**You will need:**  
color pencils or crayons  
card paper  
paper fastener  
scissors



If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.  
1John 1:9

If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you.  
Matthew 6:14



Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.  
Ephesians 4:32

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake.  
1John 2:12

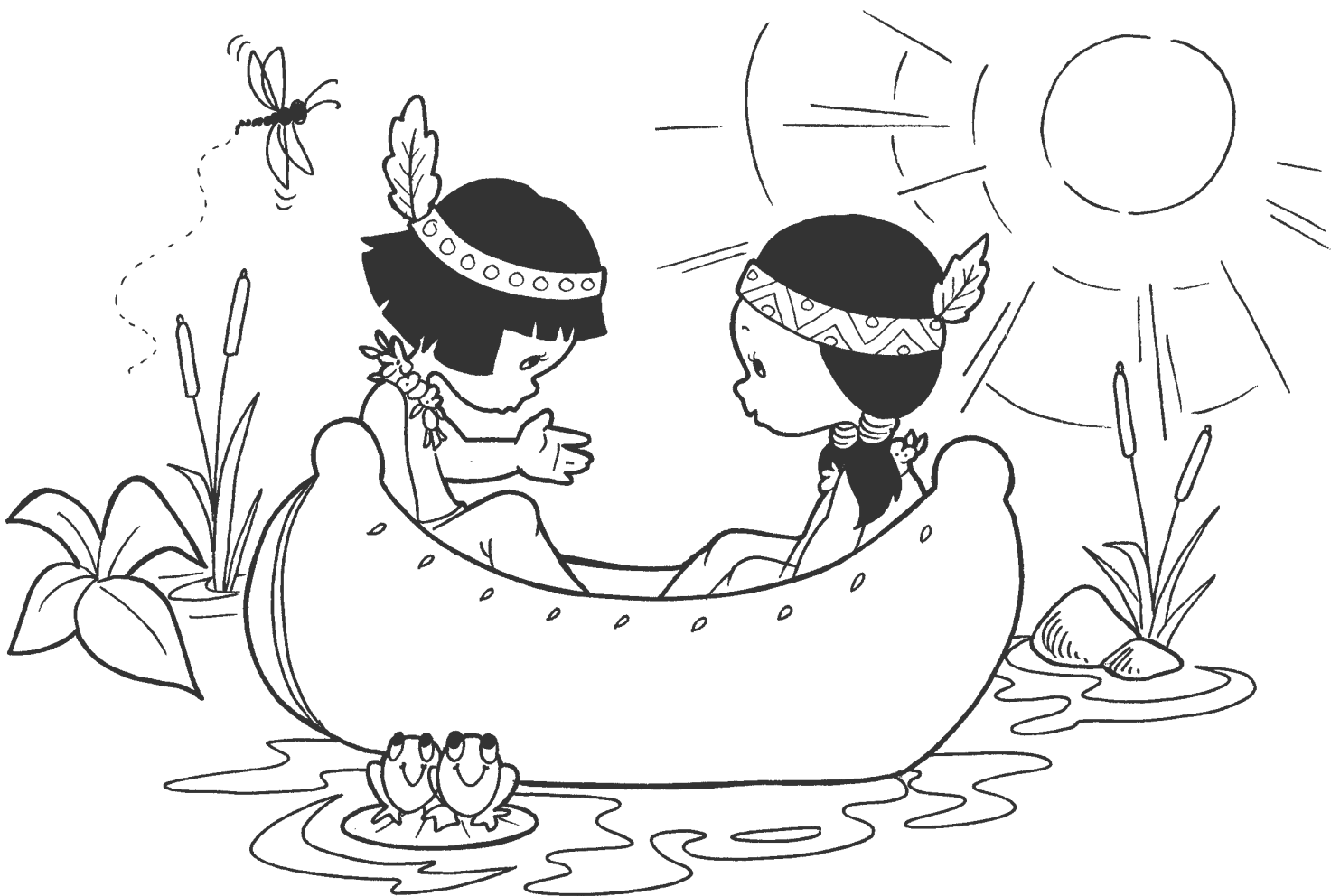
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# From Jesus—with Love



Do you know why I died on the cross? So that you could be forgiven for your sins and so that you could live forever with Me in Heaven. That's how much I love you! But did you know that I also want to teach you to forgive each other? Have you ever made a big mistake and felt very sorry and wanted the person you wronged to forgive you? How did it make you feel when they forgave you? It felt good, didn't it? It helped to heal the hurt and make you want to do better, right? Just like you have been forgiven, you should forgive. I know it's hard to forgive sometimes, especially if you're really hurt by something someone did. But you'll feel better if you forgive, and it will make the person who wronged you love you and want to do better.

So next time someone does something wrong and you get all angry inside and start thinking mean things, just ask Me to help you to forgive them like I've forgiven you for all the wrong things you've done, too. And if you forgive others, then when you do wrong, they'll want to forgive you, too. See, it works both ways! I love you and I know you can do it. I want to fill your heart with love.



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