

God Is In Our Hearts: A Lesson on Forgiveness and God's Love

GRADES 1-3 - Lesson I (Year III, Day 5)

Goal: To introduce children to the concept of sin and forgiveness and how much God loves them.

Lesson: Sometimes, we choose to do the wrong thing. These choices are called sins. Our sins hurt God and others. We know that God loves us no matter what. He forgives us when we sin. He asks us to forgive others. What is the difference between a sin, temptation and an accident?

- A sin is choosing to do something wrong on purpose,
- An accident is something you do without meaning to do it.
- A temptation is wanting to do something wrong but choosing not to do it.

Sin, Accident or Temptation? Give the students these scenarios and ask them to answer if it's a sin, accident or temptation.

1. Liam thinks about eating his sister's chocolate bar when she's not looking, but doesn't
2. Emma calls Chloe a mean name and hurts her feelings.
3. Noah trips and knocks over Amelia's paint jar and ruins her painting
4. Mia talks back to her mom and refuses to do her chores.
5. Matthew gets really angry and wants to hit his brother but he doesn't do it.
6. Sara takes her dad's phone to watch a video after he told her not to.

When we are tempted to do something wrong but don't do it - it's not a sin, it's a victory! We should celebrate and thank God for helping us overcome the temptation. But whenever we do something to hurt someone else, even if it's an accident, we need to say we are sorry to the person we hurt. When we sin, we are disobeying God and it hurts Him just like it hurts our parents when we don't listen. We need to say sorry not only to the person we hurt (even if we only hurt ourselves) but to God too. We can always trust that God will forgive us. He never stops loving us no matter what we do.

Ask students to recall experiences of making up with friends or family members. They can recall times when differences were settled with an apology, a handshake, a hug, etc. Discuss the many different ways to say "I'm sorry." What makes a good apology? .

To make a good apology:

- Take responsibility for your own actions. Name what you did specifically and acknowledge that it was wrong.
- Name the hurt you caused the other person. (Eg. “I’m sorry I said those mean things and made you feel sad” or “ I’m sorry I broke your doll, I know you really loved it”)
- Don’t use the word “but” to shift the blame onto others; (Example: “I’m sorry but you said something that made me mad”)
- Don’t look or sound frustrated or annoyed when you apologize (Example: Shouting “Ok, Ok! I said I’m sorry!”)
- Don’t get mad if your apology is not accepted immediately. Sometimes it takes time to be able to forgive when we are feeling hurt or angry.

Activity: Guess Fake or Real Apology

Present different scenarios where an apology is necessary. Have the students come up with various real and fake (bad) apologies. Then, go in a circle and have them read their apologies. Each time a kid reads an apology, the others need to guess if it was real or not, and what gave them the clues.

An example of a fake apology could look like: ‘I am sorry you didn’t look where you were walking so I tripped you’ while a genuine apology sounds like ‘I’m sorry I tripped you, are you okay?’

(see this site for [reference](#))

Activity: Prodigal Son Maze

Remember the story of the prodigal son from Lesson 1? Help the prodigal Son find his way home and apologize to his father! ([printable maze handout](#))

Activity: [You Forgive Me | Children's Action Song](#)

Prayer: Dear Jesus, I’m sorry for the times I have chosen to do the wrong thing. Thank you for forgiving me. Help me to admit when I am wrong and to forgive other people when they hurt me. Amen.

Lesson adapted from the plans on the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and Peace website