**Lesson Plan**

October 5, 2025

### God Forgives Me—God Gives Me a New Start

**Bible Story:** Jesus Called a Tax Collector (Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32)

**Theme Verse:** “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”(2 Corinthians 5:17a)

Teachers rally with your team a few minutes before kids start to arrive: Rally is a pre-service time for you to be equipped and encouraged in your ministry.

Read: Mark 2:14,17

Share: This October we are teaching kids that God forgives me and you. Kids will learn that God will forgive all our wrong choices and provide a new way to have a relationship with Him through Jesus. This week we are teaching the story of Jesus calling Matthew, the tax collector, to follow Him. Jesus gave Matthew a new start when He forgave Matthew and welcomed him into a relationship with Him. (Read Mark 2:14,17.) Kids will learn that God gives them a new start too!

Pray: Lead the group in prayer, asking God to help Kids understand their need for forgiveness and recognize that God has provided the way to be forgiven through Jesus.

Remember: Share important information related to today’s activities. Mention any upcoming ministry announcements.

**Pre-Service:** TeachersChoose Playlister and start the preservice slide with music

**Co-Teacher/Volunteers: Arrival time, please use either one of these options as kids arrive for the morning to build relationships with kids and encourage them to build relationships with one another.**

**Option 1:** Kids will take turns playing animal charades.

**Big Goal:**Be part of a team.

**Leader Prep:**Print and cut out the “Animal Action” printable, one per group. Place cards in a gift bag.

**What To Do:**Hey, friends! Today we are going to play an animal guessing game called “Animal Actions.” Let’s say that together. “Animal Actions!” Good job! Actions are things we do or ways we move. When it is your turn, you will choose a card from this bag, look at it, and play out the way the animal on the card moves. The tricky part is you cannot use any words or sounds—you can only do actions. The rest of us will try to guess what animal you are playing out. When you think you know what it is, I want you to put your hands on your head. Then we will take turns guessing. If we get it wrong, that is OK. We will try again. If we get it right, we will have a new friend pick a card and play out what the animal is. Are you ready to play? (Allow responses.) Let's get started.

**Keep It Going:**Play additional rounds, allowing kids to come up with their own animals to play out or to use animal sounds instead of actions.

**Connect It:**Great job playing out animal actions and guessing the animals! While we were working together to guess the animal, we got to work as a team. Way to go, everyone!

**Option 2:** Kids will answer questions about things they like and do motions based on whether or not they like the same things as others.

**Big Goal:**Find something in common.

**What To Do:**Hello, everyone! My name is \_\_\_\_, and I am so glad you are here! Let’s all sit in a circle. As more friends come in, we can scoot back and make room for them to join. Let’s get to know each other by doing an activity together. This activity is called “That’s Me.” What is it called? (That’s Me!) Great! For this activity, everyone will have a turn to answer a question about something they really like. As a team, we will listen to the friend sharing. If our friend names something that you really like, I want you to put your hands on your head like this. (Demonstrate putting your hands on your head.) Let’s do that together. Ready? (Allow responses.) Great! If what someone names is something you do not really like, I want you to put your hands on your stomach like this. (Demonstrate putting your hands on your stomach.) What will we do if we like the same thing as our friend? (Allow responses.) Yes! We will put our hands on our heads. What will we do if we do not like what our friend says? (Allow responses.) Right again! We will touch our stomachs. I think we are ready! We will go around the circle, and each person will have a turn to answer a question. Our first question is, “What is a color you like?” (Allow each child to have a turn answering the question. Invite the group to respond by putting their hands on their heads or stomachs.)

**Keep It Going:**Ask additional questions such as, “What is a toy you like? What is something you like to eat for dinner? What is an animal you like? What is a game you like to play? What is something you like to do outside?”

**Loud And Clear:**Wow! We have things in common, things we like that are the same, and things that are different about us all. One thing we can know is that we belong and are all on the same team here. That is so exciting!

##### **Leader Tip: Announce a 2-to-3-minute signal before asking them to clean up their toys. Giving your group a mental head start will begin to cue their minds for what is next.**

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##### **Clean-up time:**

##### **What to do:** Teacher play clean- up song, encouraging all kids to help get things put away and ready for service.

##### **Service**

**Teacher Opener:** Hi, friends! My name is \_\_\_\_, and it is so great to be here with you today. We have so many fun things to do and learn. One of my favorite ways to get ready to learn is to warm up and move to get my wiggles out. Let’s do that together. Everyone, stand up and do what I do. Let’s warm up together! First, let’s warm up our hands in front of our bodies. (Rub hands together in front of body. Allow kids to follow.) Next, let’s warm up our hands up high. (Rub hands together above your head. Allow kids to follow.) Finally, let’s warm up our hands down low. (Rub hands together at waist-level. Allow kids to follow.) Wait! That wasn’t right! When we warmed up our hands, we did not reach low enough. Let’s redo that. A redo means doing something again. Ready? Let’s redo it. Let’s warm up our hands down low. (Rub hands together close to your ankles or lower calves. Allow kids to follow.) Great job!

Let’s all have a seat. Today we are learning about a special word—Redo! Let’s say that together. “Redo!” Sometimes when we get something wrong, we get to redo it, like in our warm-up activity. Other times we need a redo because we sin, which means we make a wrong choice. When we make wrong choices, we need God to forgive us. We need a redo. Today we are learning that God forgives me and you. Let’s say that together. “God forgives me and you!” Good!

**Worship song #1:** Teachers, Co-Teachers, and volunteers worship with the kids, modeling what it looks like to give God our praise. Stand in the front of the room, or next to the kids- but not in the back.

**Bible Story Video**

What to do

* Play the Bible Story use the script below after video to help make the connection for the kids.

**Making the connection script:** Let’s pray and talk to God. We can thank Him for sending Jesus. When we ask Jesus to forgive us, He does! Let’s close our eyes as we pray. Ready? Let’s pray in 3-2-1.

God, thank You for forgiving us. Thank You that Jesus came so we can be forgiven and have a friendship with You. Thank You for giving us a new start. Amen.

Let's all stand and sing one last song to God together today!

**Worship song #2:** Teachers, Co-Teachers, and volunteers worship with the kids, modeling what it looks like to give God our praise. Stand in the front of the room, or next to the kids- but not in the back.

**Memory Verse Video:**

Let's stand up together and learn our Theme Verse!

##### **Leader Tip**: Choose between the Host-Led or the Video-Led option. Watch the Theme Verse Video to learn the motions. Use the Big Deal motions provided.

**Theme Verse Motions:**

If anyone is in Christ, (Point to the sky.)
he is a new creation. (Cross open palms in front of body moving upward.)
2 Corinthians 5:17a (Hold hands out like a book.)

**Small Group Time:**

**Option #1:** Kids will create a stopwatch.

**Big Goal:** Remember the Super Clue.

**Leader Prep:**Print “Make A Stopwatch” printables on cardstock, one per four children. Cut the pages into fourths or cut out each stopwatch. Cut yarn into 30-inch strands. Make a sample.

**Craft Instructions:**

1. **Before the session, print “Make A Stopwatch” printables on cardstock, one per four children. Cut the pages into fourths or cut out each stopwatch. Cut yarn into 30-inch strands. Make a sample.**
2. **Give each child a printable and crayons.**
3. **Encourage kids to decorate the stopwatch face with crayons.**
4. **Assist kids by punching a hole in the stopwatch where noted. Thread yarn into the hole to make a necklace.**

**What To Do:** Who remembers what today’s Super Clue is? (Allow responses.) That’s right! Our Super Clue is a stopwatch. Who remembers what our Super Clue reminds us of? (Allow responses.) Very nice! Stopwatches start and stop. A stopwatch can remind us that God forgives us and gives us a new start. Let’s make a stopwatch that we can take home. It will look like this. (Display craft sample.) First, we are going to use crayons to decorate the stopwatch. Then I will use a hole punch to make a hole at the top of your stopwatch and help you thread yarn in the hole and tie it.

**Loud And Clear:**These are great looking stopwatches. What is our Super Clue today? (A stopwatch!) If you have a stopwatch, you can use it to start a race or a game and time yourself. If you need to, you can stop the timer on the stopwatch and start again. That is called a redo. Sometimes we need a redo when we are playing a game, making a craft, or because we make a wrong choice. God gives a redo when we ask Him to forgive us; He gives us a new start. We all make wrong choices and need God to forgive us. Jesus came so we can be forgiven and have a friendship with God. I hope that when you see your stopwatch you remember how God’s forgiveness gives you a new start.

**Option 2:** Kids will move in timed intervals.

**Big Goal:**Remember the Main Idea, **“God Gives Me a New Start.”**

**What To Do:**We are going to play a move and freeze game using a stopwatch. Our game is called “Stopwatch Freeze.” What is it called? (Stopwatch Freeze!) Great! A stopwatch helps us keep track of how much time has passed. In our game, we are going to move for 10 seconds at a time. Our stopwatch is going to help us keep track of that time. When the music starts, everyone can show me their best moves. When the music stops and I say, “Freeze!” everyone will stop and be still. When everyone is frozen, I will restart the clock, and we will do it again. This is going to be so much fun! Are you ready? Let’s go!

**Keep It Going:**Try longer or shorter intervals of movement time. Allow kids to start and stop the stopwatch.

**Loud And Clear:**Whew! That was some great moving and freezing! It was fun to keep track of the time on the stopwatch and to call freeze when the time was up. It was even more fun to reset the stopwatch and have a chance to redo our game and start moving again. Sometimes we need a redo because we make a wrong choice. God gives us a redo when we ask for forgiveness; He gives us a new start. Jesus came so we can be forgiven and have a friendship with God. This forgiveness and friendship are part of the new start God gives us when He forgives us.

**Close out in prayer:**

WHAT TO DO

* Ask for any specific prayer requests
* Pray with the group
* Lead the group in the prayer below.

**WHAT YOU SAY:** God, thank You for forgiving us. Thank You that Jesus came so we can be forgiven and have a friendship with You. Thank You for giving us a new start. Amen.

**End of service Activity:**

Have all kids come back together and have a seat and lead kids in the following discussions below. This is a time for side-by-side learning, where all kids have the opportunity to connect and participate.

**Closing: Leader Tip:** Work with your Teacher to dismiss the kids in a fun, manageable, and safe way. As kids leave, make sure they have all of the crafts and papers. Share with the person picking them up something positive you observed today. Invite them back next week.