

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

We can forgive others as God forgave us.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn they can forgive others because God loves and forgives them.

KEY PASSAGE:

Luke 15:11-24 The Prodigal Son

MEMORY VERSE:

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

SUMMARY:

Jesus told a story about a man who had two sons. One son was very rude and disrespectful of his father. His father however, showed us how much God loves us and is willing to forgive us because when the disrespectful son returned, his father welcomed him with a hug rather than punishing him.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Teach us to be people who forgive.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

MEMORY VERSE

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

“Be kind and tender to one another. Forgive each another, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done.” Ephesians 4:32 (NirV)

LARGE GROUP:

Divide the room into girls and boys. Have the girls and boys read the verse aloud together, alternating every other word, so girls say the first word, boys say the second word, girls third, etc.

SMALL GROUP:

Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

SKIT

THE NON-AVENGERS: THE GOOD DAD

ITEMS NEEDED:

None

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

2M

CHARACTERS:

Dad - The lost son's father

Sam Fury - Leader of the Non-Avengers

Dad enters.

DAD: Thank you all for coming to the party tonight. I know a lot of you, if you were in my shoes, would not have done what I did. All I can say is, "My son was lost, but now he is found. Thank you for coming to celebrate his return with me."

Sam Fury enters clapping slowly.

SAM: Great speech. That was truly inspiring.

DAD: Thank you, friend.

SAM: It's not what I would have said. I would have told that lousy prodigal son of mine to go back and sleep with the pigs after he wasted all my money.

DAD: I know. My other son said the same thing. Why would I forgive him? Why wouldn't I—

SAM: Why wouldn't you be an Avenger?

DAD: Well, for one thing, I don't look good in spandex tights, and I don't have a cool shield made out of vibranium.

SAM: You could be Iron Man. Or Hawkeye.

SKIT

DAD: Captain America is more my speed. I like the All-American vibe. And besides, as much as he was all about avenging things, he was also forgiving. When everyone else wanted to throw the Winter Soldier in jail, only Cap wanted to forgive him.

SAM: Huh. I never thought of it that way. But then again, I forgave the cat that scratched out my eye.

DAD: I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

SAM: My name is Sam Fury. I'm here to talk to you about the Non-Avengers Initiative.

DAD: The Non-Avengers Initiative?

SAM: I'm putting together a team of men and women and kids who will commit to for giving instead of avenging.

DAD: That seems like an odd team to assemble. Most people would want to assemble teams to avenge things. To get payback or revenge on people who treated them wrong.

SAM: But that's not the team for you, is it?

DAD: No, sir. I want to forgive others, like my son, because I know I've been forgiven too.

SAM: And why is that?

DAD: Because even though I didn't deserve it, God forgave me.

SAM: That's my man! That's why I want you to be... the first Non-Avenger.

DAD: Cool. Do I get a uniform?

SAM: Sure, you can get a uniform.

DAD: How about an action figure?

SAM: One thing at a time, Dad.

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A bowl of dog food

Has anyone here ever tasted dog food? What about cat food? I won't let any of you sample it this morning, so you'll have to take my word for it when I say – it's not very tasty. Animal food never is to people. And if you think this dog food is unappetizing, you should see what they feed to pigs. Pig slop is made up of vegetable rinds, leftovers, stale bread, and other foods people would otherwise throw out. It's gross today, but it was even grosser in Biblical times.

The lost son knew he deserved to eat pig slop for what he did to his father. His father knew it too. But when the father saw the lost son walking toward home, he ran to him! There was no thought of payback. The father forgave his son completely.

God forgives our sins completely, and He wants us to do the same for others. We can show God's love simply by forgiving instead of avenging. It won't make us super heroes, but it will make us super witnesses for the love of God.

LARGE GROUP GAME

SUPERHERO PARENTS

ITEMS NEEDED:

None

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose one player for this game. Read off the names of the superhero parents below, and see if the player can guess which superhero belongs to the parent or parents. If they get 3 out of 5 correct, they win a prize.

Thomas and Martha Wayne
BATMAN

Howard Stark
IRON MAN

Clark and Martha Kent
SUPERMAN

Aunt May and Uncle Ben
SPIDER-MAN

Hank Pym
THE WASP

VARIATION:

This can also be a game for 2 players, where the players buzz in to answer the questions. Whoever gets the most correct wins.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

The lost son's father forgave him, even though he did not deserve it. We can forgive because God has forgiven us.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

We can forgive others as God forgave us.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn they can forgive others because God loves and forgives them.

KEY PASSAGE:

Luke 15:11-24 The Prodigal Son

INTRO:

What is an Avenger? Have you ever thought about that question, and that word? What makes people Avengers? I guess a simple answer would be, “An Avenger is a member of the Marvel Comics superhero team assembled in the movies by Nick Fury.” Captain America, Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, Black Widow, Hawkeye, Black Panther, Spider-Man, Ant-Man, War Machine, Captain Marvel – all of them have become members of the super team known as the Avengers.

But why call them the Avengers? It sure sounds like a cool name, but what does it mean to be an avenger? The dictionary says that to avenge someone means to “inflict harm in return for an injury or wrong done to oneself or another,” or to “inflict harm on behalf of oneself or someone else previously wronged or harmed.” A good illustration is the poster ad campaign for the movie Avengers: Endgame. In the previous movie, Infinity War, Thanos wiped out half the population in the entire universe, including many of the great Marvel heroes. In Endgame, the heroes left behind came together to “avenge the fallen,” to pay back Thanos for harming their friends and loved ones.

The Avengers is a perfect name for the heroes of the movies and the comics, but Jesus wants something different from the people who call themselves Christians. He wants us to be people who forgive, rather than people who avenge. When someone hurts us, He wants us to love rather than strike back. God wants us to be people who show His love to others because God loved us first. He wants us to forgive the wrongs done to us because He has forgiven all of our wrongs.

The Bible teaches us that we have all wronged God with our sins. Rather than avenging Himself and all the people we have wronged, God sent His Son Jesus to pay the price for our sins. God offers us forgiveness and eternal life. He wants us to share that love and forgiveness by being Non-Avengers who can love and forgive others.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Jesus explained this kind of Non-Avenger style in a beautiful parable about a boy who hurt his father and ran away from home. The love the father shows to his wayward son is just a glimpse at the love God has for us.

READ LUKE 15:11-24

MAIN POINT:

The lost son in this story disrespected his father by asking for his inheritance – all the money he was supposed to receive after his father died! The son then went off to the city and wasted all the money his father had worked a lifetime to earn. It's easy to look at the boy wallowing with the pigs and think, "Serves him right! He was rude to his father, and he got what he deserved." Some of the people listening to Jesus that day were probably hoping the father would reject the son and tell him, "Go back to the pigs! You're no son of mine!"

The father had no thought of avenging himself. Even though his son had hurt him, he loved his son dearly. He pushed aside the anger and the hurt and he ran to embrace his boy! The father forgave his son just as God forgives all of us when we ask Him. He shows us that we can be Non-Avengers and share God's love by forgiving others just as God forgave us.

DRIVE IT HOME:

The forgiveness of the father for his lost son is a lovely way to end that story, but that's not where Jesus ended it. If you read the rest of Luke 15, we will see that not everyone was happy the father chose to forgive his son.

READ LUKE 15:25-32

I dare say the jealous brother, the "good son" who stayed behind, was speaking for many of the people who heard this parable. The same people who wanted the father to reject the lost son were feeling sympathy for the other son. He doesn't deserve to come home! He doesn't deserve forgiveness! Why would anyone forgive the lost son?

The father forgave him for the same reason Jesus wants us to forgive. It's because we have been forgiven. We didn't deserve Jesus. We didn't deserve to have anyone forgive our sins. God forgives everyone who accepts Jesus as their Savior, and he expects everyone who says they are a Christian to be a Non-Avenger.

The story of the second son reminds us we have a choice to make. We can be Avengers. We can refuse to forgive and reject those who have hurt us. Or we can be like the father and we can share the love of Jesus by forgiving others. God can use us to become true heroes of the faith when we learn to forgive others and show them how much God loves them.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Are you ready to become a Non-Avenger? Are you willing to forgive as God forgave you? God is calling you to take the first step to becoming a true hero for the faith by forgiving others.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Teach us to be people who forgive.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

Who is your favorite Avenger?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Ephesians 4:32

Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of Duck Duck Goose, only instead of saying Duck Duck Goose, Say "Avenger Avenger Thanos!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Luke 15:11-24

What did the son do with his father's money?

What did the son want his father to do when he went home?

What did the father do for his son?

What does this story teach us about God's forgiveness?

Why do we need to forgive others?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

Who is your favorite Avenger?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Ephesians 4:32

Give all the kids a Bible. Then after you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of Duck Duck Goose, only instead of saying Duck Duck Goose, Say "Avenger Avenger Thanos!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Luke 15:11-24

How had the son offended and insulted his father?

Why did the son decide to go home?

Why did the father forgive his son?

What does this story teach us about God's forgiveness?

Why do we need to forgive others?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

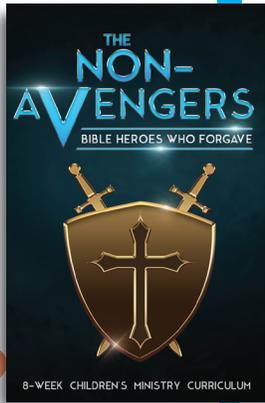
In Jesus' name,

Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Today's parable is known as the tale of the lost _____.
A. son*
B. coin
C. sheep
2. A young man asked his father for his _____.
A. car
B. inheritance*
C. house
3. The young man wasted all that money and decided to _____.
A. go back to school
B. run away
C. beg for his father's forgiveness*
4. When the father saw his son coming home, he _____.
A. ran to him and forgave him*
B. chased him away
C. told him to get on his knees and beg
5. We can forgive others because _____.
A. we are better than them
B. they deserve it
C. God forgave us*



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

The Non-Avengers Lesson 1

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: THE PRODIGAL SON'S DAD



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

Jesus told a story about a man who had two sons. One son was very rude and disrespectful of his father. His father however, showed us how much God loves us and is willing to forgive us because when the disrespectful son returned, his father welcomed him with a hug rather than punishing him. Luke 15:11-24 The Prodigal Son



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Share a story with your kids about a time your parents or someone close to you forgave you. How did it feel to be forgiven?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- How did the father of the lost son respond when his son came home?
- What does the parable of the lost son tell us about God's forgiveness?
- Why does God want us to forgive others?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

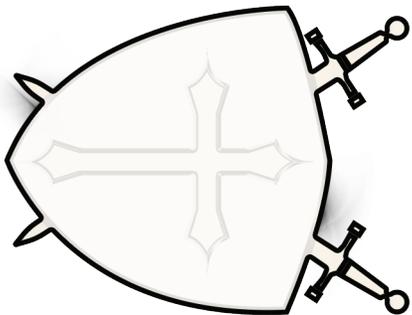
"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)



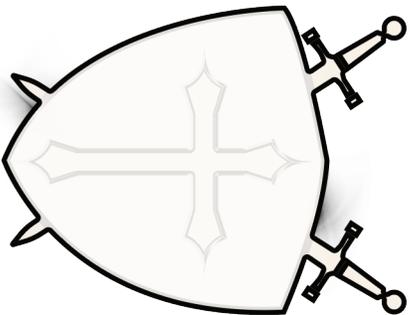
PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

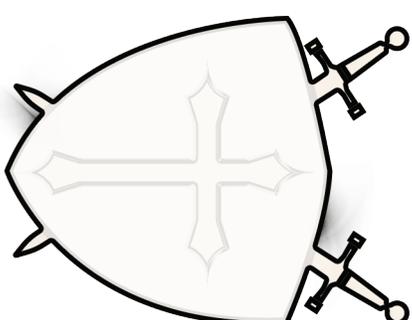
This father of the lost son shows us how unconditional God's love is. God will always forgive us, and He wants us to always be willing to forgive others. Pray that you will be a forgiving parent and model to your kids how we are to treat other people.



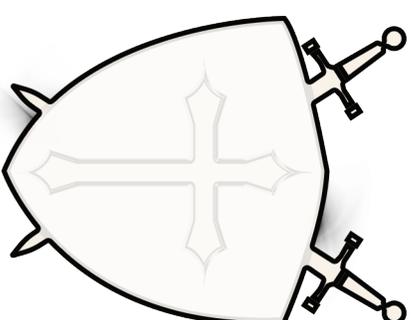
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- Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

CRAFT ACTIVITY

Have the kids design a logo for a super hero team called the Non-Avengers. They can draw and color their logo, or they can cut and paste construction paper together to make their logo for this super team.