

Katie



MATTHEW 18

THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

Open: Greet, Praises, Requests, Pray

Supplies: Plaster of Paris, silicone baking mould (hearts would be ideal, but ice cube ones work), jar of jelly beans

Activity:

At the very beginning of class, have the kids gather around. Following the instructions on the Plaster of Paris, make enough to fill the moulds for each child to have one to take home. Don't tell them what will happen, just explain that we will come back and check it at the end of the lesson.

Open:

Show the kids a jar of jellybeans. Count out before the lesson how many it holds and tell the children the number. Call a student up, give them the jar, and explain to them that they owe you 100 jars of jellybeans just like the one you're holding. They will likely tell you they don't have jellybeans. Threaten them with after-church chores. (At this point, explain they may have to beg to be forgiven of the debt). When they beg, forgive the debt and tell them they don't have to pay.

Call another student up. Give them 1 jellybean. Tell the new student that they owe the other student 1 jar of jellybeans. See how it plays out and what they do.

Explain:

Today we're going to read a story about canceled debts, a lot like what we just did. Let's see how these people handle it.

Read: Matthew 18:21-35

Ask:

How do you think the first man felt when his debts were forgiven? Why do you think he wasn't willing to forgive the smaller debt? What happens to the first man? How does that apply to us and the Kingdom of God?

Forgiveness is important, isn't it? The story reminds us that God has forgiven us for every one of our sins. If he forgave us that much, we should forgive someone who sins against us.

But forgiveness is hard, right? So how do we do it? And why do we do it? (Allow for answers). (If we don't forgive others their sins against us, the Bible states God won't forgive our sins).

Explain:

When we live with unforgiveness in our hearts, it actually hurts us. It hardens our hearts toward people and even toward God. In my life, when I've had a hard time forgiving someone, I start to pray for them. It's hard to do because they feel like an enemy sometimes. But as I pray, my heart usually starts to change towards them. When you start to get angry again, remind yourself that you've forgiven them, even if it doesn't feel like it.

Forgiveness isn't always a feeling. You won't always feel different right away. But it's a choice. And it's one we need to make again and again.

Show the kids the hardened Plaster of Paris. Do you see how hard things can become? Our hearts harden when we harbor unforgiveness. Pop out the concrete/plaster of Paris hearts or shapes. Give them to the kids to feel and hold and take home to remind them that they don't want a hard heart of unforgiveness. If dry enough, they can draw a heart on them.

Memorize: Matthew 18:27

Close in Prayer

