

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *To Forgive is Divine*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- How are sins forgiven?
- Who forgives sins?
- What must I do to be forgiven?
- What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins?

I believe...

- Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646)
- The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647)
- In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&A question 649)
- Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&A question 652)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- Chart paper or whiteboard and markers (optional)
- Stopwatch or clock with a seconds hand
- For Your Journey
 - Episode 47 - [When are sins forgiven?](#)
 - Episode 58 - [Repentance](#)
- NAC.today article 'Not the only way, but the sure way' <http://nac.today/en/a/462906>

References:

- Catechism Q&A questions 247, 644 – 652
- Bible: Matthew 6:14-15, Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:9-10

PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Imagine carrying around a stone for every sin you've ever committed. The weight would be unbearable. This week in group, we'll be discussing forgiveness. Join us tomorrow at _____.

MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Facilitator Notes:

- Please add local information and customize as necessary.
- Consider including a video or article link used in this discussion and encourage parents to discuss with their child.

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about forgiveness: how are sins forgiven, who forgives sins, what must I do to be forgiven, what are the effects of the forgiveness of sins. Last week the students were asked to read a story about a righteous judge. This week the story continues as the judge demonstrates forgiveness. Tell your student about a time when they were very little and they broke or damaged something valuable, that you had to pay to have it replaced or repaired. Ask them how this is like sin and forgiveness. As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact your Youth Leaders.

Your Youth Leaders

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (Up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.

- What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?
- What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?
- So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?
- Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

HOOK (Up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.

- How are you and how are you feeling today?
- Who would like to share their point to ponder or call to action from last week?

SET THE STAGE (Up to 1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

- Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students.

I wonder...

- How are sins forgiven?
- Who forgives sins?
- What must I do to be forgiven?
- What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins?

LESSON (Up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Review the story of "The Righteous Judge" with the students and have them share their Point to Ponder from the previous discussion, T8 (Why do think the judge came down and paid the woman's fine?) Then have the students read Part 2 of the story from their student guides and discuss what parts of the story demonstrate forgiveness and why. Then answer the following questions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the students read the story and answer the questions with a partner or in small groups before coming back together to share with the whole group. Remind students of Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (see Catechism Q&A question 652) 	<p>"The judge was her father. He loved his daughter, yet he was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law and he couldn't simply say to her, 'Because I love you so much, I forgive you. You may leave.' If he had done that, he wouldn't have been a righteous judge. He wouldn't have upheld the law. But he loved his daughter so much that he was willing to take off his judicial robe and come down in front and represent her as her father and pay the fine." (excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter", McDowell, 1977)</p> <p>Student Question #1 How is this like what God did for us through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the hook activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No matter how much God loves us "The wages of sin is death." He is a righteous and just God. ➤ Yet He is a loving God, He sacrificed His Son, Jesus Christ. This eternally valid sacrifice is the debt for our sins being reconciled. ➤ Only God can forgive our sins. <p>Student Question #2 Why can't the judge / God just forgive, why does the "fine" have to be paid? How does this relate to the hook activity ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remind the students that when we sin there is a consequence/debt and it needs to be paid by someone....THAT PAYMENT BY CHRIST IS A GIFT TO US! ➤ Even if the woman paid her own fine, it is the judge/God who wipes the record clean.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If time allows: Extend the discussion to include why the law is necessary (speeding is dangerous and could result in an accident, causing harm or death). The law can, at times, reveal to us who we really are (she may have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We are incapable of forgiving sins or being liberated from sin on our own because we cannot pay the debt/fine for sin. There is nothing we can do to earn or buy forgiveness. ➤ It is extremely important to note the last paragraph of the answer to Catechism Q&A question 652: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Irrespective of the forgiveness of sins, a person remains accountable for the consequences and responsibilities that have come about through is sinful conduct, whether they are of a material or legal nature." <p>Student Question #3 What could have prevented the judge/woman's father from paying the fine?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If she did not believe (disrespected) that the authority of the judge/God includes the ability to forgive/pay the debt incurred by her sin. ➤ If she had argued and claimed "not guilty", and not recognized/acknowledged her breaking of the law. ➤ If she showed no remorse/regret or desire to change her ways. <p>Student Question #4 What emotions do you think the woman felt knowing her father/God was willing to do this for her? How does this relate to the hook activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She felt overwhelming thankfulness as she recognized the love her father/God had for her. ➤ She felt humbleness as she acknowledged/recognized her shortcomings. ➤ She is now inspired/motivated to show this kind of love to others...SHE CAN NOW GIVE A GIFT!

considered herself a law-abiding citizen, but when she is late for work, she is inclined to ignore the law).

- We should not try to make excuses for breaking the law (she was late for work), but rather use the power of His Spirit to overcome the desire to break the law, which is strengthened by the knowledge that God loves us and we don't want to disappoint Him.

- If a student says the woman is not remorseful – remind students that part of forgiveness is repenting.

We are expected to obey the laws.

- Ask a student to recite or read the tenth Article of Faith (the Articles of Faith can be found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A)
 - *I believe that I am obliged to obey the worldly authorities provided no godly laws are thereby transgressed.*
- God wants and expects us to follow the laws. It isn't up to us to determine whether a law is right or wrong. Even if we don't agree with a law, we are to follow it unless it goes against a godly law.

To be forgiven, we must acknowledge our sinfulness and seek forgiveness

- Ask a student to read 1 John 1:9-10
 - *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

While only God can forgive sins, we can transform our nature using Jesus as our example by having a forgiving attitude towards those that may offend us.

Ask a student to read Matthew 6:14-15:

- *For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Remind students that in the Lord's Prayer we pray:

- *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

Student Question #5 What are situations that would require you to extend forgiveness to someone?

- Listen to the answers and supplement or summarize with situations similar to:
 - Someone said something unkind or untrue to you, or about you.
 - Sibling ate the last of a snack you were saving.
- Ask a student to read the **Flashpoint: Forgiveness** on page 1084 of the IGNITE Bible.
- When you forgive someone for something they did, you don't hold any resentment or grudges.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Our Vision is to create a church in which people feel at home and, inspired by the Holy Spirit and their love for God, align their lives to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and thus prepare themselves for His return and eternal life.
- Our Mission is reaching out to all people in order to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptize them with water and the Holy Spirit. Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.
- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

Wrap up the lesson with why we must be forgiven, linking it to our mission and vision and our eternal future with God.

- The phrase "the Gospel of Jesus Christ" appears in both the vision and mission statements. The gospel is the "good news" that forgiveness and salvation are possible as a result of Jesus' sacrificial death.
- If time allows, share the following article from NAC.today, 'Not the only way, but the sure way' <http://nac.today/en/a/462906>
- OR
- Watch For Your Journey - Episode 47, When are sins forgiven? <http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/k48ftgu>
 - If there isn't enough time to watch the For Your Journey episode during the discussion time, please assign as homework and/or send in the follow up parent email and encourage parents to watch with their students and discuss at home.

Close with the "I Believe..." questions

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God.

I believe...

- Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646)
- The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647)
- In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&A question 649)
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Point to Ponder....

- God forgives our sins. The Absolution during the divine service may not be the exact moment our sin is forgiven. But rather, the Absolution is the proclamation that our sins have been if we've gone through the necessary steps of realizing our sin, repenting, and seeking reconciliation.

A Call to Action....

- The words of the Absolution are found in the Catechism Q&A question 644. This week, pick out a phrase from the Absolution that is the most meaningful to you. Explain to a family member or friend why this phrase means so much to you.

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *To forgive is divine*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are sins forgiven? ➤ Who forgives sins? ➤ What must I do to be forgiven? ➤ What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&A question 646) ➤ The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&A question 647) ➤ In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&A question 649) ➤ Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&A question 652)
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Read Part 2 of the story and discuss what parts of the story demonstrates forgiveness and why. Then answer the following questions:

"The judge was her father. He loved his daughter, yet he was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law and he couldn't simply say to her, 'Because I love you so much, I forgive you. You may leave.' If he had done that, he wouldn't have been a righteous judge. He wouldn't have upheld the law. But he loved his daughter so much that he was willing to take off his judicial robe and come down in front and represent her as her father and pay the fine." (excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter", McDowell, 1977)

1. How is this like what God did for us through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the hook activity?

2. Why can't the judge / God just forgive, why does the "fine" have to be paid? How does this relate to the hook activity?

3. What could have prevented the judge/woman's father from paying the fine?

4. What emotions do you think the woman felt knowing her father/God was willing to do this for her? How does this relate to the hook activity?

5. What are situations that would require you to extend forgiveness to someone?

Point to Ponder: God forgives our sins. The Absolution during the divine service may not be the exact moment our sin is forgiven. But rather, the Absolution is the proclamation that our sins have been if we've gone through the necessary steps of realizing our sin, repenting, and seeking reconciliation.

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