



Until Seventy Times Seven

Matthew 18; Luke 10

Objectives:

- Talk about what it means to forgive “70x7” times.
- Emphasize the gift of forgiveness God gives to us.
We forgive because we are forgiven.

Reinforces Principles of:

- Forgiveness

This Lesson contains 5 activities:

Choose the activities that fit your family’s schedule.

Use on Mondays to introduce the topic, or the following Sunday to review.

Reverence Time: Song, prayer, scripture and video clip

Lesson Time: Lesson summary and points to ponder

Story Time: Story

Activity Time: Object lesson or activity

Treat Time: Prayer, theme related recipe & music video



Reverence Time

Approximate Time: 5 minutes

Sing Together: Children's Songbook #99, "Help Me Dear Father"
If you wish to have an online music file to accompany you visit:
<https://www.lds.org/music/library/childrens-songbook/help-me-dear-father>

Prayer:

Scripture Time: Matthew 18:21-22

21. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?
22. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Video Clip: Watch a clip from the Living Scriptures Streaming Library, *Forgive Us Our Debts* (The Dramatized New Testament). You can find the clip at <https://www.livingscriptures.com/fhe-lesson-seventy-times-seven/>



Lesson Time

Approximate Time: 10-15 minutes

Lesson

Summary:

Peter asked Jesus how many times we should forgive someone. Surely if we forgave someone seven, eight, or even ten times when they had wronged us, then we would be justified in retaliation. No, Jesus said we should forgive “until seventy-times seven”. By saying this, he didn’t mean we had to forgive exactly 490 times. He meant that we should always forgive.

Jesus told Peter a parable about a king who was owed a debt. The man who owed the debt was about to be cast into prison, but the king had mercy on him, and let him go free. Not long after, the man was angry with someone who also owed him money, and had his debtor cast into prison. When the king heard what had happened, he told the man that he would not forgive him if he refused to forgive others.

Heavenly Father loves us and forgives us as we turn our trust to Him. He invites us to return that graciousness to others and forgive in the same way.

Points to Ponder:

Who does the king in the parable represent? (Discuss ideas.)

Who does the first servant in the parable represent? (Discuss ideas.)

Who does the second servant in the parable represent? (The persons who have hurt or offended us. Eph. 4:32)

What was Jesus teaching his disciples in this parable? (Discuss ideas.)

How many times did Jesus said we must forgive? (See Matt. 18:21–22.)

Why is it important to forgive others? (Discuss ideas.)

Quote:

“As we struggle toward that perfection which Jesus Christ holds out for us, let us give emphasis to forgiveness. Let us cultivate that aspect of our character and rejoice in the spirit of forgiveness, which is the comforting message of the Atonement.”

Theodore M. Burton



Story Time

Approximate Time: 3 minutes

Timmy peaked through the blinds to make sure Jeff was gone. When he couldn't see him, he dashed across the street to Mark's house and rang the doorbell. While Timmy waited uneasily for someone to answer the door he didn't notice Jeff crawling out from under the porch of the vacant house next door with a frightened kitten in his arms. But, Jeff saw him!

Feeling betrayed, Jeff shouted, "I'm never playing with you again, Timmy!" The kitten scratched Jeff's arms, wriggling free of his grasp. Tears filled Jeff's eyes, not from the pain of the scratches, but from the hurt his friend had inflicted on him.

Running home, Jeff quietly closed the back door behind him before creeping up the stairs to his bedroom. The bed creaked when Jeff threw himself onto it, burying his head in his pillow to muffle the sobs that escaped from his chest.

Father glanced up from his newspaper when he heard Tim's bed creak above him. "Is Jeff home?" he asked Mother.

Mother glanced at the clock on the wall. "He shouldn't be. He went to play at Timmy's. He has another forty-five minutes before he needs to be home for dinner."

Creak, creak. Mother looked confused. "Unless we have a ghost, someone's up there."

Father knocked on Jeff's door. "Jeff, are you in there? Can I come in?"

Jeff rolled onto his back and took a deep breath. "I guess," Jeff answered, wiping away the tears, even though he knew his freckled face, red from crying, would betray him.

Father sat next to Jeff on the bed. "What's wrong, Champ?" he asked.

Jeff laid back down on the bed and stared at the ceiling. "I went over to Timmy's house to play, but he said he couldn't till he cleaned his room," Jeff explained. "Then, he tried to sneak over to Mark's house, but I saw him! Mark told me he does it all the time, but I didn't believe him. Now, I know it's true. I'm never going to forgive him! If he wants Mark for his best friend, he can have him!"

Father could tell that the hurt Jeff had been feeling was quickly turning into anger. What would Jesus do? he asked himself. Father almost laughed out loud when the thought came to him. Of course! My Father taught me to ask myself that question when I was a boy and I'm still asking daily.

"Jeff I know you're hurt and angry, but before you decide to never forgive Timmy, I would like you to ask yourself, 'What would Jesus do?' Can you do that for me?"

"What would Jesus do?" Jeff didn't need to think about it for very long before answering, "Jesus would forgive him. But, Dad, Mark told me Timmy does it all the time!"

"Did Jesus put a number on how many times we should forgive others?" Father asked.

Jeff thought for a moment. "He, did!" Jeff remembered. "When Peter asked Jesus how many times he had to forgive, Jesus told him, 'Seventy times seven.'" Jeff quickly did the math in his head, Zero times seven equals zero. Seven times seven equals forty-nine. Four-hundred-ninety!

"Wow, Dad! Jesus said to forgive four-hundred and ninety times!" Then he sheepishly added, "That's a bunch of times. If I do what Jesus would do, I'll have to forgive Timmy about four-hundred-and-eighty-something more times."

"That is a lot of times," Father agreed. "So, do you think Jesus meant that we should keep track of how many times we forgive others? Then as soon as we reach the four-hundred-ninety mark we shouldn't forgive them anymore?"

Jeff pictured himself carrying a notebook around, putting check marks next to all his friends names when they did something hurtful. Jeff's face then turned really red when he thought about his friends putting check marks next to his name when he did something that hurt them.

"Since none of us are perfect, we would be spending an awful lot of time keeping track. We wouldn't have much time to do anything else" Jeff answered. "I think Jesus was just using seventy times seven as an example. He want's us to always forgive. Doesn't He?"

"That's right!" Father picked Jeff's scriptures up from the night stand and thumbed through them. Stopping at D&C 64:10, he read, "'I the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.' You see, Jeff, the Lord knows that if we don't have forgiving hearts our hearts will harden and we will be miserable. He wants us to forgive others so we can be happy. Does that make sense?"

Jeff thought about the hard tight feeling he had in his chest when he had vowed to never forgive Timmy. How miserable he felt. He wouldn't want to feel like that all the time. "It sure does!"

Father ruffled Jeff's hair. "You're a good kid, Son. Get washed up—it's almost time for dinner."

"Dad, is it okay if I go find Timmy first? Now that I've forgiven him, I need to tell him I'm sorry and hope he'll forgive me!"

by Margie Nauta Lee



Activity Time

Approximate time: 20 minutes

What you need: A copy of the “70 x 7” activity (artwork included with this lesson), one self-adhesive laminating sheet, scissors, glue, cardstock, X-acto knife and a sack or box.

Preparation

1. Glue artwork to front and back of cardstock.
2. Laminate artwork.
3. Use X-acto knife to cut out puzzle pieces.
4. Place puzzle pieces in sack or box.

Activity: (Younger children will need help from an older sibling or parent.)

1. **Explain:** Peter was so hurt that he asked Jesus “How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” (Matt. 18:21.)
2. **Ask:** Has anyone ever done something to you that made you feel so bad that you didn’t want to forgive them? (Discuss.)
3. Put puzzle together by having family members take turns drawing a puzzle pieces out of the sack or box. Read and discuss the situation on the back. Emphasize that when we forgive others, it does not mean that we approve of the behavior or transgression.
4. **Ask:** How many times did Sarah forgive Andrew? (Seven.)

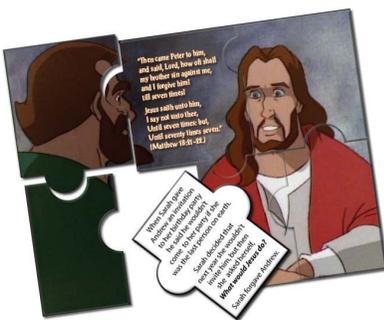
5. **Ask:** If this puzzle has seven pieces, how many times would we have to put it together to equal the number of times Jesus told Peter we need to forgive? (See Matt. 18:22).

6. **Ask:** How many times is 70 x 7?

7. **Explain:** Although 490 is a lot of times to forgive, Jesus was really teaching that we need to always forgive whether a person hurts us again or whether we just need to daily reaffirm our forgiveness for a single hurtful act.

8. **Ask:** Does forgiving others help us to feel better and why? (Discuss ideas.)

9. **Explain:** Jesus Christ gave us the perfect example of how to forgive those who offend us. “Biblical history tells us that no mortal man has ever been subjected to the humility, the pain, the suffering that were experienced by the Savior of the world during his final hours of mortality. ... There he hung, his body broken and bleeding, still taunted by his enemies; and it was in the midst of all this that Jesus [pled] perhaps quietly, with deep reverence, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’ (Luke 23:34.)” *Robert L. Simpson, Improvement Era, Dec. 1966 © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.*



An illustration of Jesus and Peter. Jesus is on the left, wearing a red robe over a white tunic, with long brown hair and a beard, looking towards Peter. Peter is on the right, wearing a brown tunic, with short brown hair and a beard, looking back at Jesus. The background is a simple grey wall with a green bush-like shape on the left. The text is centered between them.

*“Then came Peter to him,
and said, Lord, how oft shall
my brother sin against me,
and I forgive him?
till seven times?*

*Jesus saith unto him,
I say not unto thee,
Until seven times: but,
Until seventy times seven.”
(Matthew 18:21-22.)*

Sarah tripped when she was walking up to give a talk in Primary.

Andrew pointed and laughed.

Sarah's face turned red.

Sarah felt like tripping Andrew,

but then she asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.

Andrew pulled faces at Sarah during reading and it made her laugh.

Mrs. Jones made Sarah stay in for recess. Sarah was so mad she wanted to get Andrew in trouble, too, but then she asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.

Andrew took the ball from Sarah at recess. How many times must I forgive him?

Sarah remembered the FHE lesson Mother taught a few weeks ago. Jesus said, "70 x 7."

Sarah forgave Andrew.

Sarah smiled when Andrew ran past her. Andrew smiled, too, and gave the ball back.

to Sarah.

Andrew dropped a book off his desk. When Sarah picked it up for him he told her to keep her hands off his stuff.

Sarah felt like throwing

the book back on

the ground, but then

she asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.

Andrew pulled Sarah's hair. It hurt her head and feelings.

She wanted

to pull his hair,

but then she

asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.

When Sarah gave Andrew an invitation to her birthday party he said he wouldn't come to her party if she was the last person on earth.

Sarah decided that next year she wouldn't invite him, but then she asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.

Andrew grabbed Sarah's picture and tore it in half.

Sarah felt like

punching him

in the nose, but

then she asked herself,

What would Jesus do?

Sarah forgave Andrew.



Treat Time

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Chill Time: Approximately 30-45 minutes

Bake Time: 10 minutes

Flash Card “Forgiveness” Cookies

1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup sugar
1 cup butter, softened
3 eggs
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
5 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons buttermilk
Frosting



Preheat oven to 350° F. Cream together sugars, butter, vanilla and eggs. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and nutmeg. Add flour mixture alternately with buttermilk to creamed mixture. Cover and refrigerate until easy to handle. On a floured surface, roll out dough to 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into 3 inch x 4 inch squares. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 10-13 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

Treat Time: Give each family member a cookie to frost and decorate like a flash card (See picture-a parent or older sibling will need to help younger children).

Closing Prayer and blessing on the food.

Note: Don't have time to bake? Replace cookies with Toaster Strudels® or Pop-Tarts®