

Forgiveness

Character First! Elementary Student Guide

Series 1, Booklet 7

Definition

Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and not holding a grudge.

I Will...

- be quick to forgive.
- not cover up my own wrongs but will be quick to ask for forgiveness.
- not seek revenge.
- respond kindly to those who hurt me.
- not take up offenses for others.

Sheep's wool is very forgiving. It stretches when pulled, it sheds water when it rains, and it even resists fire.

Picture This!

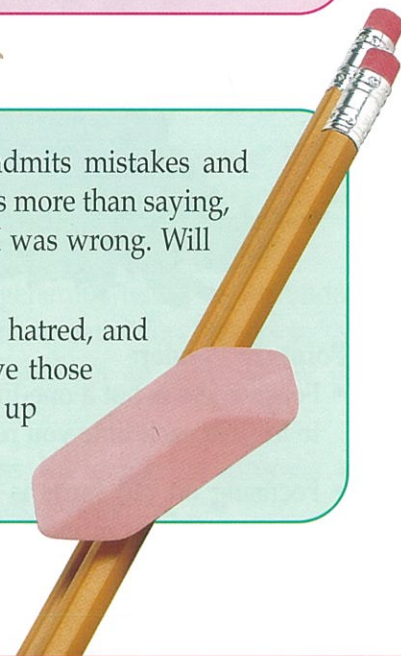
Forgiveness is *clearing the record of those who have wronged me and not holding a grudge*. Imagine a sheet of paper with marks on it. Forgiveness is like erasing the marks so that you can use the paper again.

A forgiving person must recognize when others have done wrong. But instead of taking revenge, a forgiving person chooses to let go of the anger and move on.

A forgiving person also admits mistakes and asks for forgiveness. This is more than saying, "I'm sorry." It is saying, "I was wrong. Will you forgive me?"

Don't let anger, bitterness, hatred, and guilt ruin your life. Forgive those who hurt you and clear up your own mistakes.

Name: _____



Activities

No Fishing Allowed!

Forgiving someone is like throwing the offense into the sea. It is finished, washed away, and left alone.

Whenever you remember the offense, you show forgiveness by leaving it at the bottom of the sea and not bringing it up.

Remind yourself to forgive others by making a sign that says: "No Fishing!" Make the sign with construction paper and markers, and write the definition of forgiveness on the back.

Supplies:

- Construction paper
- Scissors and tape
- Crayons or markers

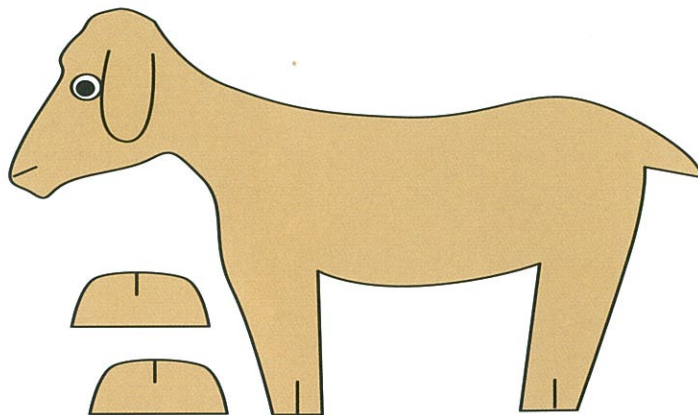


Points to Ponder:

- Forgiveness is not a one-time event. You must choose to forgive each time you remember an offense.
- Focusing on old hurts is like opening old wounds. Forgive offenses properly and let the healing begin.

The Woolly Lamb

There are two sides to forgiveness—forgiving others, and asking for forgiveness. It is not fair to expect others to forgive you when you do not forgive someone else for what he or she did to you.



Trace a lamb on a piece of heavy paper, and cut it out. On one side of the lamb, list the ways others have offended or hurt you. When you forgive others, you are clearing the record of wrong. To show this, glue cotton balls over the list of offenses.

On the other side of the lamb, list ways you have hurt other people—even if you didn't mean to hurt them. Go to those you have offended, and ask for their forgiveness. Cover your list of offenses after you make things right.

When you see your lamb, remember forgiveness covers your wrongs and the wrongs of others.

Supplies:

- Heavy paper
- Scissors
- Cotton
- Glue
- Pen or pencil



From outside the hospital door, President Lincoln heard the chatter of nurses over the hushed groans of wounded soldiers. He took a deep breath and walked into the building.

Inside, he met Dr. Jerome Walker, who escorted him through the corridors crowded with injured Union soldiers. President Lincoln stood beside the makeshift beds and spoke with the soldiers. He listened to their stories with heartfelt concern—lifting sore spirits with his interest and encouragement.

Some young men spoke bitterly of the South, cursing “the rebel boys” for the part they played in destroying the nation.

“Son, we have all played a part in that destruction. There are two sides to every war; the fault is not entirely theirs.”

Then they approached three wards containing Southern prisoners.

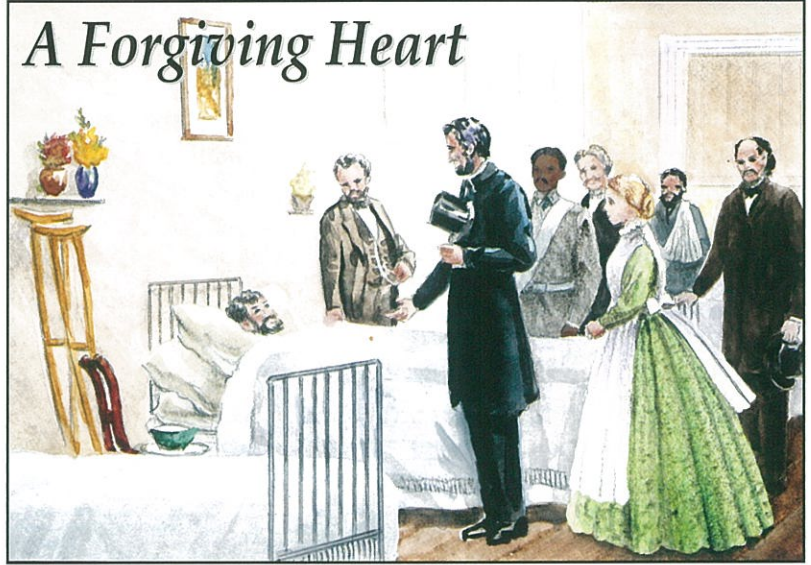
“I doubt you’ll want to go in there, sir,” Dr. Walker said. “They are only Rebels.”

Abe placed his large hand on Dr. Walker’s shoulder and said in a low voice. “You mean Confederates.”

Drummer boy saying goodbye to his mother.



A Forgiving Heart



President Lincoln visiting wounded soldiers.

As they walked through the prisoners’ ward, Dr. Walker was amazed by the President’s kindness to the Confederate soldiers—the same soldiers who had fought and killed many of his own men. His handshakes were every bit as hearty and his interest in their welfare every bit as genuine.

Finally Dr. Walker asked, “How do you do it, sir? How can you overlook what these men represent? They are prisoners of war!”

“They are also brave citizens,” the President said, “in need of care and forgiving hearts far more than our criticism. Revenge is never a wise investment. The pain of war is revenge enough for both sides to endure.”

On April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

General Grant extended generous terms of surrender, and President Lincoln demonstrated forgiveness to the entire Confederate Army and set an example for all Americans.

Mr. Lincoln’s forgiveness hastened the process of rebuilding the United States of America.

Sheep

Since the 1940s, many have tried to create a man-made version of sheep's wool, but nothing has all the forgiving qualities of the real thing.

Not Easily Damaged

Wool is stronger than steel fibers of equal size.

Wool has tiny scales that make it feel rough, and the scales help wool fibers bend as many as 20,000 times without breaking. A silk fiber breaks after only 1,800 creases, and rayon breaks after only 75.



Wool's tiny curls also make it very elastic. It can stretch up to 30 percent beyond its original length and bounce back without becoming distorted. This quality allows wool clothing to hold its shape.

Practice It!

After reading this lesson, discuss the following questions with a parent, guardian, or teacher who can sign below.

1. What happens to you if you stay bitter and angry at someone?
2. What is the proper way to ask for forgiveness?
3. How does sheep's wool illustrate forgiveness?

Signature _____

Date _____

Not Easily Soaked

The tiny scales on a wool fiber act like shingles, shedding water rather than absorbing it. This property helps water run off a sheep's back.



Wool fabric can hold up to 35 percent of its own weight in moisture without feeling damp, whereas polyester feels wet when carrying only 1 or 2 percent of its weight in moisture.

Not Easily Burned

Because it requires a lot of heat to catch on fire, wool burns only when kept in direct contact with fire, and it usually quits burning when the flame is taken away. Thus, wool does not burst into flames like other materials.

Coloring Fun

