

Esau and Jacob Forgive Each Other



Overview

Materials You'll Need

- small size disposable paper cups (one per student)
- green color streamers
- popsicle sticks
- heart-shaped patterns on heavy construction paper or pre-made wood hearts
- markers
- glue
- scissors



Scriptures

Gen 31:3; 32:1-21; 33:1-9

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God has forgiven us and He wants us to forgive one another

Behavioral Objective(s)

To learn to forgive others and resolve to live in peace

Memory Verse

"Have peace with one another." (Mk 9:50)



Bible Knowledge

Jacob's Life In Haran

Fearing Esau's anger, Rebekah convinced Isaac that Jacob should journey to the home of her brother, Laban, to find a wife. After Isaac agreed, Jacob started out on his lonely journey from Beersheba to Haran in Padan-aram.

Twenty years later, Jacob would return to his homeland. He was frightened by the news that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. However, Jacob asked the Lord for help, reminding the Lord of His promise of protection. Jacob placed his family in separate arrangements and sent lavish gifts to his brother, Esau, hoping for the best outcome. The

Lord took care of Jacob just as He had promised. The Lord had changed the heart of Esau and he surprised Jacob by receiving him without any bitterness. The brothers reconciled and ended their years of hostility.

Esau in Seir

Even though Esau had lost his birthright, he could still receive the blessings of the eldest son from Isaac. But Rebekah came up with a scheme to help Jacob receive the blessing instead. After Jacob fled, Esau lived in the land of Seir. Years later the brothers reconciled but their descendants continued to struggle against each other.



Understanding Your Students

Many young children experience sibling rivalry. This is especially true if there is a new baby in the family or if one child is much older and has more privileges. It may manifest itself through hitting or fighting. In addition, children are naturally impulsive. As adults, we have learned to control ourselves when tense situations arise. We have learned this through personal experience and sometimes from trial and error. We also know of

adults who seem to lack the ability to control their emotions and impulses when undesirable situations occur. The children need to be taught early on the importance of self-control and what can happen when we lose control.

In trying to relay the importance of "peaceability" there are many qualities that need to be stressed within the lessons and through our character. Calmness, peacefulness, and serenity are important to include in the overall classroom atmosphere. The children also need to be taught that differences are seldom resolved through con-

flict. Here are some suggestions you could try when conflicts arise:

The "Calm Couch" and the "Repenting Bench." These methods combine a penalty for temper and hurtful conduct with a way to get attention once there is improvement. The "Repenting Bench" is a hard bench (or two straight-backed chairs) somewhere in the classroom where children who fight are assigned to sit. Children who fight (physically or verbally) are sent instantly to the bench. A child can

get off only when he can tell you what he (not the other child) did wrong and when he "repents" to the other child with a hug and a request for forgiveness. The "Calm Couch/Chair" is a softer chair. When a child is fussy or loses his temper, have him sit in the calm chair until he is calm. Don't treat the calm chair or the repenting bench as punishments. Rather, they are ways to help the child achieve some level of self-control.



Vocabulary

Pretend

to act like someone or something we are not

Messenger

someone who delivers messages or says things for another person



Before You Teach

Often, we might feel cheated, as Esau did. It can happen at work, at school or even in church. It is very easy for us to become bitter and angry as a result. Cain, in envy and bitterness, killed his own brother. Similarly, Saul plotted to destroy David. Even if we don't take any drastic measures, as these two people did, the hatred itself can consume us and take over our lives. In fact, Saul spent years hunting down David and never gave up. He was driven by his intense dislike for one person. Bitterness can become a vicious cycle. In some instances, we can even turn into a completely different person, forgetting what it is like to be happy and content.

Anger is one feeling that easily enters our hearts and becomes extremely difficult to get rid

of. How can we really be forgiving and let bygones be bygones?

We can remove bitterness from our lives by openly expressing our feelings to God. It is normal to feel anger. God made us that way. But when it begins to take over our lives, we need to seriously talk to God about it. It is a huge first step to admit to God we have a problem. It gradually becomes easier to let it go when we can talk about what is really bothering us. Often, it isn't about the other person or thing, but rather it is usually about something we feel is inadequate about ourselves. Even if someone has wronged us, communicating to God will help us truly forgive one another.

It also helps to focus on the good things we do have in our lives. When we are content with who we are and what we have, then we naturally feel joy; fewer things in life seem to bother us. Let us ask God to give us a heart of love and kindness, so that we may spread joy to others around us.



Bible Story

Jacob's Life in Haran

Do you remember that Jacob and Esau were twin brothers? But they were different in many ways. Esau was hairy and liked to hunt while Jacob was not hairy and liked to stay near the tent.

We learned in our last lesson that Jacob tricked his brother and father. While Esau was away hunting, Jacob pretended to be Esau. Isaac, the father, could not see very well, so he believed that he was

talking to Esau. He told Jacob some things that he had planned to say to Esau. Esau was the oldest son because he was born a few minutes before Jacob. So Esau had the right to be put in charge of the family. But Isaac blessed Jacob instead and put Jacob in charge of the family. When Esau came home, he was very angry because his brother had tricked him. He was so angry he said he wanted to hurt Jacob. That is when Jacob left his home and went far away.

We know that Jacob traveled all the way to his uncle's house in Haran. After he got there, he

worked very hard and started his own family. Many years went by. Jacob had a large family now and he was happy that God had blessed and protected him even though he was so far from his own home. But a part of him was still sad. Do you know why? He hadn't seen his mother, father or his brother for about twenty years. That is a very long time to be away from the people you love.

Jacob Decides to Go Home

One night, God spoke to Jacob.

"Now you should go home to your father. I will be with you."

Jacob was happy to hear these words. He really wanted to see his parents. But he was also a little bit scared. He knew he had done something wrong many years ago by tricking his brother. Would Esau still be mad at him? But then he remembered that God said He would be with him. So he obeyed God's words and packed his things to return home. He had a large family and many animals so it took some time to get everything together. But once everyone was ready, Jacob headed home.

Jacob Sends His Messengers

It took many days to travel home. As Jacob got closer, he decided to send some messengers ahead of him to tell his brother that he was coming back to see him.

Jacob said to his messengers, "Tell Esau that I have been staying with our uncle Laban for the last twenty years. But now, I have come home."

So the messengers went ahead to tell Esau what Jacob had just said. After some time, the messengers came back. Jacob was excited. He wanted to know what his brother had said.

"What did Esau say to you?" asked Jacob.

"We went to your brother Esau and told him everything you asked us to say. Now, he is coming out to meet you, with four hundred men."

When Jacob heard this, he didn't know what to think. "Why is Esau meeting me with four hundred men?" wondered Jacob. "Is he still angry and coming to fight with me?"

Jacob Prays to God

Jacob was a little bit scared. He wasn't sure what he should do next. So he decided to pray to God.

"God, you said I should go back home and now I am almost there. I don't know if Esau is still mad or not. Maybe he is coming with four hundred men to attack me. Please keep me and my family safe. Help Esau not be angry with me anymore." Jacob said these words in his prayer to God. He believed that God would protect him.

Jacob Sends Gifts to Esau

After he prayed, Jacob decided that he would send some gifts to Esau first. He wanted to show Esau that he was sorry for what he had done. So he got many goats, rams, camels, cows and donkeys from his herd. Then he asked some servants to bring these animals to his brother. Jacob hoped his brother would not be mad at him. He told his servants to go ahead of him.

Esau Forgives His Brother

Jacob was nervous as he headed home. He hoped his brother would like his gifts. Soon, Jacob looked up and saw from far away that his brother was coming. Jacob ran up and bowed down to the ground. He wanted Esau to forgive him. And do you know what Esau did? He ran up to Jacob and hugged him. Jacob did not expect this at all. As they hugged, they cried. The brothers cried because they had not seen each other in twenty years. Esau wasn't angry at Jacob. He was just happy to see him. He was glad his brother had finally come home.

"Who are all these people?" asked Esau.

Jacob answered, "These are my family and servants."

"And what about all those animals I just saw on my way here?" Esau asked.

"They are gifts to you. I don't want you to be mad at me anymore," replied Jacob.

"I am not mad at you. You should keep the animals. God has blessed me and I have all that I need," Esau said to his brother.

Jacob could not believe his ears. He thought his brother had come with four hundred men to attack him. But instead, he came to hug him and forgive him. He was happy he had come home. In fact, he was so happy, he cried some more.

It was good that the brothers could talk and forget the things that had happened before. Brothers should not be mad at each other. Esau was glad he forgave Jacob and Jacob was happy Esau

was not angry. Now they could be a big happy family.



Check For Understanding

1. **Who cheated Esau out of his birthright?**
(Jacob)
2. **Why did Jacob run away?** (Esau was angry at him for tricking him out of the blessings.)
3. **After many years Jacob wanted to go home. Was he sorry for what he had done to his brother?** (Yes)

4. **What did God say to Jacob before he went home?** (God would be with him.)
5. **What did Jacob do when he heard Esau was coming with four hundred men?** (He was scared and he prayed to God to change Esau's heart.)
6. **How did Esau show Jacob that he was no longer angry?** (He ran to Jacob and hugged him.)
7. **What does it mean to forgive someone?**
(Let students answer.)



Life Application Story

I Forgive You

John was taking a bath. He was having fun playing with a new water toy. After a little while John became bored with just one toy so he took his sister Michelle's toothbrush and pretended that it was a giant attacking the toy ship.

"Shoot! Boom! Splash! Take this you big giant. I am stronger than you!" John said to himself.

"What are you doing in there, John?" Michelle asked while knocking on the bathroom door.

"I'm trying to kill the giant. He is trying to attack my ship!" said John.

"Hurry, John, get out of the water. I need to use the bathroom!" Michelle said.

"You can come in, Michelle! Come and see how powerful my ship is," said John.

Michelle opened the bathroom door and saw John holding her toothbrush and scratching it against his toy. She also saw John putting her toothbrush in his bath water. Michelle became really mad.

"Mom!" Michelle yelled at the top of her lungs. "John is using my toothbrush as his giant, and he is putting it in the water he is taking a bath in!"

Mrs. Marsh hurried in to see what had hap-

pened and said, "John, what are you doing? Why did you take Michelle's toothbrush and put it in your bath water?"

"Mom, look, my ship is stronger than the giant! See how the giant is falling over?" said John.

Mrs. Marsh shook her head and said, "John, please answer my question."

"Mom, I couldn't find anything else to be my giant so I took Michelle's toothbrush. It makes a good giant. I didn't mean to get it dirty. I was so caught up in playing that I forgot it was her toothbrush. Sorry, Michelle," John said.

"It's okay John. I forgive you. I guess I'll get a new toothbrush for myself later, but please don't use my new toothbrush as your giant. Promise?" asked Michelle.

"I promise," said John.

Questions to Think About

1. **How did Michelle feel when she found out that John used her toothbrush as a toy?** (Angry)
2. **What did John do after he realized he had ruined his sister's toothbrush?** (He apologized.)
3. **What did Michelle do?** (She forgave her brother.)
4. **What is your favorite toy?** (Let students answer.)
5. **What if someone took that toy and broke it?**

- What would you do? (Let students answer.)
6. What does it mean to forgive someone? How



Activity 1

Angry and Happy

Look at the pictures. When Esau was mad at Jacob, how did the brothers feel? (angry) When Esau forgave Jacob, how did they feel? (happy) God wants us to get along with each other.



Activity 2

How We Get Along

Look at the pictures. How are the friends getting along? (playing together and sharing a picnic) God wants us to get along with one another. In the space below, draw a picture of how you get along with your friends or family.



Activity 3

Peace Flower Pot

Materials:

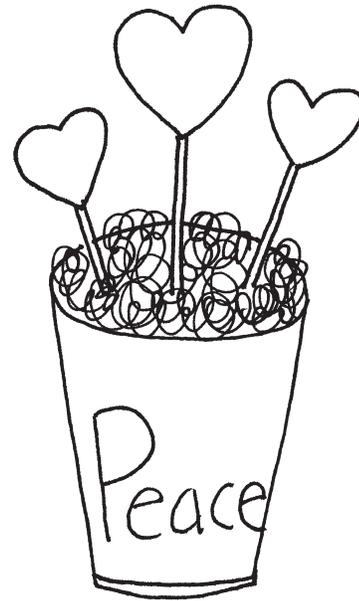
1. small size disposable paper cups (one per student)
2. green color streamers
3. popsicle sticks
4. heart-shaped patterns on heavy paper or pre-made wood hearts (from craft stores)
5. markers
6. glue
7. scissors

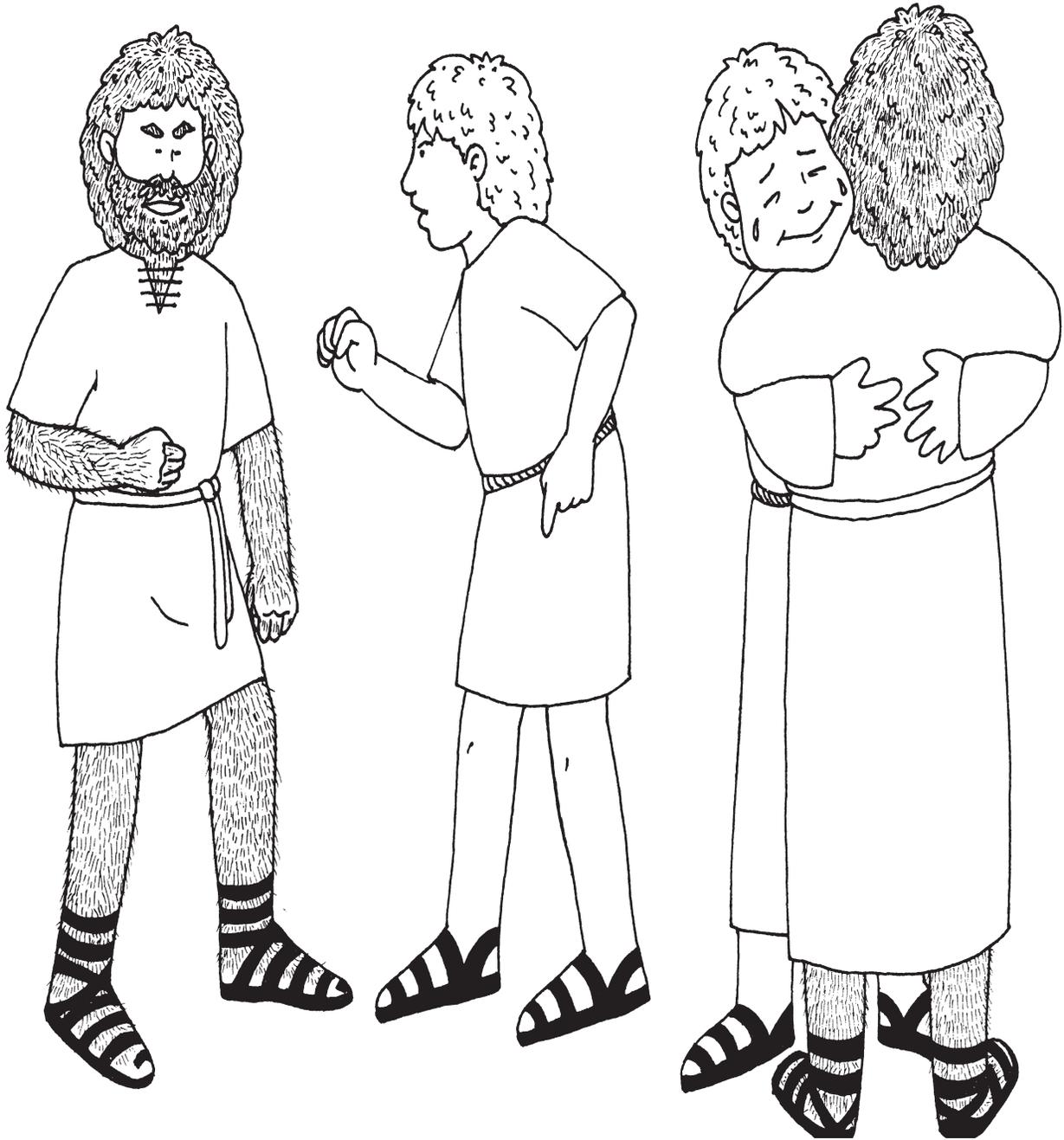
Directions:

1. Provide one paper cup per student. Ask them to decorate it with markers. Be sure to write the word "Peace" on the cup to show that we all want to live in peace with one another.

can you forgive someone? (Let students answer.)

2. Give each student three hearts of various sizes cut from heavy paper or three pre-cut wood hearts (they can be purchased at craft stores).
3. Ask students to color the hearts.
4. Glue the hearts to the top of popsicle sticks.
5. Stuff the cup with green streamers (to mimic grass). Then put the sticks into the cup with the hearts as flowers.
6. Remind the students that God wants us to get along with everyone. He wants us to live in peace and harmony. Let this flower pot encourage them to obey God's teaching.





Esau and Jacob are

_____.

Esau and Jacob are

_____.

God wants us to get along.

How We Get Along



I can get along with my friends or family by...