



# Faith Adventures Youth Resource

*Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: [www.bit.ly/How-To-FAYR](http://www.bit.ly/How-To-FAYR)

## Matthew 18: 21-35 The unforgiving servant

**Theme:** Forgive us (Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us)

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### Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

Welcome as we continue our exploration of prayer and, in particular, The Lord's Prayer. In this session we'll be focussing on "Forgive us our sins/debts/trespasses as we forgive those..." You might ask your group which version they think is easiest to understand.

The Gospel passage we are using is quite long – it includes Jesus' parable about forgiveness. We are told that Jesus is with his 'followers'. Because we hear that Peter asked a question, we can assume that Jesus is with his closest followers and friends. It's possible that Jesus tells a story about owing money because the disciples were concerned about funds for their mission. This comes to a head in Matthew 26.6.13. However, it is important to not just concentrate on the money aspect – forgiving debts – but on anything which we need to forgive, or for which we need to be forgiven. Some translations of the Bible suggest that Jesus gives a finite number (77 or even 7 times 77) on how often we must forgive. We chose this version of the Bible story because it suggests that you should forgive again and again and again.

It is possible that members of your group might have relations who have been dealt with by the justice system, or who are facing financial hardship and debt. Be sensitive when talking about forgiveness, particularly if in relation to the Bible story of forgiving debt.

Forgiving someone is not the same as pretending something didn't happen - there may still be consequences for what has happened. Forgiving someone means not holding a grudge and can often be as beneficial to the one who does the forgiving as the one who is forgiven.

## Together

Let's start our time with God and each other well

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

*All mighty God,*

*Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.*

*Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.*

*Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.*

*Amen*

### Active and alternative game

See this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together for suitable games for this theme.

## Experience

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

Research different versions of this reading on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)  
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Here is The Message version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2018%3A21-35&version=MSG>

**Watch:** Alabaster by Rend Collective

<https://youtu.be/zJsLcwScEDA?si=UZlbotQlmd9EZVsf>

### Questions for discussion

- I wonder if you know what an alabaster jar is and was used for?
- Why would the song writers have chosen that as a symbol?
- Can you ever right a wrong?

## Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

### A new way to explore the theme

You may wish to use the explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

Alternatively:

The questions at the end of the Ladder of Forgiveness exercise in FACT can lead on to some stories of people who have offered forgiveness in extraordinary circumstances. Here are some examples: [10 Acts of Forgiveness in the Face of Adversity - Listverse](#)

Invite members of your group to read a story and then put themselves in the position of the forgiver – and then the forgiven. How do they feel?

### Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.

Peter Rabbit (forgiveness) by Movie clips – This clip from Peter Rabbit shows Thomas and Peter asking for forgiveness from Bea. It shows how they asked for forgiveness and Bea's response.

[https://youtu.be/9fEMKGFr-Sk?si=\\_mN9purpet\\_YEtzE](https://youtu.be/9fEMKGFr-Sk?si=_mN9purpet_YEtzE)

- What are your first thoughts on this clip?
- I wonder what Bea's response is going to be?
- Forgiveness can be sought in many ways, how ways did you spot in this clip?

### Talking together: Going deeper

- Is there a difference between how much I forgive and how often I forgive?
- What does forgiveness mean?
- Has there been a time when you have been forgiven or forgiven someone, how did it feel?
- The passage says forgive brothers and sisters, does that mean you don't have to forgive others?

### Conversation starters

- Jesus uses money in his parable rather than a situation where you may have upset someone to explore forgiveness, I wonder why?
- How could the man in the passage earn the money back he owed if he was in prison?

## Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

### Praying together

Church House have produced two sets of prayer prompt cards, one set for 4 to 8 years and another for 8 to 12 years. These bright and engaging cards help nurture a life of prayer. You can request a pack by emailing [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk) or find them as digital downloads on the URC website: [bit.ly/Child-prayer-cards](https://bit.ly/Child-prayer-cards)



**Recite the Lord's Prayer together using your chosen version or else use this Makaton version** <https://youtu.be/xc35pUoPpqk?si=z8DEMK-P6KyLKcyg>

**Prayer** Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below. Alternatively light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

The word contrition means to be sorry; this is a well-known style of prayer especially within the Catholic denomination. If necessary, discuss the meaning of the word sins. Below are two different versions of the same prayer, one for younger people and a traditional version. What similarities and differences can you see? Which do you prefer and why? Would you write it differently? Pray the version you prefer all voices together.

#### ACT OF CONTRITION TRADITIONAL

O my God,  
I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee,  
and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments,  
but most of all because they offend Thee, my God,  
Who art all-good and deserving of all my love.  
I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace,  
to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

#### ACT OF CONTRITION FOR CHILDREN

O my God,  
I am sorry for my sins.  
In choosing to sin



and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you.  
I promise, with the help of your Son, Jesus,  
to make up for my sins  
and to love you and others as I should.  
Amen.

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## Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

## Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today? If not here are some suggestions:

- Use one of the “conversation starter” questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **Is there something you have found it hard to forgive?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT, Resources ([jpit.uk](http://jpit.uk)) *Commitment for Life* [cforl.co.uk](http://cforl.co.uk)
- Could you make an extra big effort to forgive someone something that you've been struggling with? You could write it on paper and throw it away, attach it to a balloon and let it go, write on something wipeable using felt tips and wash it away.

Thank you for exploring the **Matthew** passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk](mailto:sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk) or by sharing it on [www.bit.ly/FACT\\_FB](http://www.bit.ly/FACT_FB)

