



# Forgiveness

Goal: To express gratitude to God for forgiveness.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Luke 7:36-50

While Jesus was having a meal with religious leaders, a “woman from the city, a sinner” (v. 37, CEB) anointed Jesus’ feet with her tears and ointment. This action drew criticism from the leaders, who disapproved of the woman. However, Jesus’ story of the two debtors with unequal debts made it clear that the one to whom little is forgiven loves little. The woman’s “many sins have been forgiven; so she has shown great love” (v. 47, CEB). Jesus told her, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (v. 50, CEB).

Jesus extended pure grace to the woman. She knew she owed much to God and fell short of God’s will. However, in Jesus, she received forgiveness for all she had done. In Jesus’ reconciling grace, a new future and way of living opened. No wonder she was overcome by love and worshiped Jesus! Grace leads to gratitude. The woman’s outpouring of worship emerged from her forgiveness and a love she did not deserve.

Jesus praised the faith of the woman and told her to go in peace. We can have peace in our lives when sin is forgiven. We can live gratefully as those who receive God’s grace in Jesus Christ.

### . . . In Your Children’s Experiences

Children are growing in their faith in many ways, some visible to you and others hidden. Think about the many places where children’s expressions of gratitude to God can be expressed. Expressions can be verbal, such as prayers, or action oriented in response to God’s love and forgiveness. The children may be able to name the ways they can affirm God’s love in their lives.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Table blessings are one way families teach their children about being grateful to God for “health and strength and daily bread.” We also say blessings when we share the Lord’s Supper in worship. Helping children learn how to express gratitude to God, to worship spontaneously, is teaching them a spiritual practice that will keep them attuned to God’s graceful presence in their lives.

*O God, fill my heart with gratitude for your priceless gifts of grace and forgiveness. Amen.*



## Supplies

### Music & Melodies

[bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies](http://bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies)

### Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 9, 15, 17

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

internet-connected  
device

blanket or mats

snack

## Guided Play

choice 1: items with  
distinct smells, closed  
containers or ziplock  
bags

choice 2: bell or chime

choice 3: copies of  
**Grace Notes (GN) 1**

## Exploring

choice 1: copies of  
**GN 2**

choice 2: washable  
markers, soap, sponge  
(optional)

choice 4: copies of **GN 3**

## GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

### Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Post **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker onto a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

Before the session, collect several different items with distinct smells and place them in closed containers or ziplock bags. Use items that are not likely allergens, such as oranges, perfume, pine branches, chocolate chip cookies, bananas, and play dough.

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 2 requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet the children as they arrive and say, “Christ is risen!” Prompt them to respond, “He is risen indeed!” Tell the children that this is the Easter season, and this Easter greeting is spoken around the world during this time (the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost).

Introduce yourself to parents and caregivers who you do not know. Be sure they know who will be caring for their children. Explain to the parents and caregivers that their children will hear a story about a woman who received forgiveness and responded with gratitude. Ask about the children’s allergies or sensitivities to smells.

Introduce children to your helper or helpers. Invite them to look at the guided play activities and encourage them to participate:

1. **Playing with Aromas**—Invite the children to sniff the contents of the containers and try to guess what is inside. Comment that things we smell can remind us of special people or places.
2. **Acknowledging Kindness**—Invite the children to play with blocks or toys or in the kitchen area. Pay attention to acts of kindness happening among the children. Acknowledge and praise kindness and treating others as you would want to be treated. Ring a small bell or chime and say the child’s name. Children who want to be seen and acknowledged will begin to do acts of kindness.
3. **Showing Forgiveness**—Hand out copies of **GN 1** and read the sentence, “Forgiveness makes us happy.” Invite the children to color the children and give them happy faces. Talk with the children about forgiveness—how it makes us feel when we are forgiven for something and how it makes another feel when we



forgive them for something they have done. Tell the children they will hear a story about a woman who received forgiveness from Jesus, and it made her so happy.

**T** *For children struggling with transitions, set clear expectations and let them know how long activities should take.*

### Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner, singing “Thank You, Holy God”—SCM 15. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

#### Thanks, God

MS L

Invite the children to repeat your words and actions.

Hands! Hands! Thanks, God, for hands! (*wave hands in the air*) /

Feet! Feet! Thanks, God, for feet! (*stomp feet or march in place*) /

Food! Food! Thanks, God, for food! (*rub tummy*) /

Friends! Friends! Thanks, God, for friends! (*shake hands with neighbors*) /

Hands (*wave hands*), feet (*stomp feet*), food (*rub tummy*), and friends (*shake hands*)! /

Thank you, God! Amen. /

#### Jesus Went to Simon’s House

L

Invite the children to join in your motions as you tell about today’s story.

Jesus went to Simon’s house for dinner, (*rub stomach*) walking a long, long way. (*walk index and middle finger of right hand across left forearm*)

When a woman arrived, (*wave*)

Jesus knew she felt bad about something and he forgave her. (*hold hands in front of you, palms up*)

She was so happy, she showed Jesus her love (*put hand on heart*)

by washing his feet with her tears (*trace tears down your cheek*)

and pouring sweet-smelling perfume on his feet. (*rub hands in a washing motion*)



### Hearing the Story

C L

Open the Bible to Luke 7 and point out that the story comes from the Bible.

Read **SCM 9**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, "Amen."

After reading the story, wonder with the children why the woman poured perfume on Jesus' feet. Explain that even though we might not think it would be a nice thing to do now, Jesus liked it and was happy that the woman did it. Wonder why Jesus liked it.

Comment that if we wanted to do something nice for Jesus today, we wouldn't pour perfume on his feet. Ask the children for their ideas about what would be the best thing you could do to show you are forgiven and happy, and thank Jesus. Don't limit them to the practical or possible. Listen to their ideas.

## EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

### 1. Thank You, God

FM

Help children trace their hand inside of the heart on **GN 2**. Invite the children to trace the words below the heart. Invite them to decorate the page. Encourage them to share the heart with their family.



### 2. Make Us Clean

A FA T

Remind the children that one of the ways in which we can think about forgiveness is to think about something that has been washed and made clean.

Brainstorm some ways that we make mistakes and need forgiveness, such as being unkind to a family member, having a tantrum, hitting someone, and so forth.

Invite the children to take a washable marker and make a spot on the back of their hand. Tell them that this spot is like one of the mistakes or things we have done wrong.

Lead the children to a sink and ask them how they might get rid of the spot on their hand. Use soap and water, and a sponge if necessary, to clean the spot. Remind them that the soap is like God's forgiveness, washing away our wrongs and making us clean again.

Consider using unscented allergen-free soap, just in case you have children who have allergies.



### 3. Sing a Song L

Invite the children to follow your motions and join in the song as you sing it to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”

If you’ve ever made a mistake, raise your hand. (*raise a hand*)

If you’ve ever made a mistake, raise your hand. (*raise a hand*)

If you’ve ever made a mistake, then your head you will shake.

(*nod head up and down*)

If you’ve ever made a mistake, raise your hand. (*raise a hand*)

If you’re sorry and you know it, bow your head. (*bow head*)

If you’re sorry and you know it, bow your head. (*bow head*)

If you’re sorry and you know it, then your heart will really

show it. (*place hands over heart*)

If you’re sorry and you know it, bow your head. (*bow head*)

If you’re forgiven and you know it, shout, “Praise God!”

(*stand and shout*)

If you’re forgiven and you know it, shout, “Praise God!”

(*stand and shout*)

If you’re forgiven and you know it, you’ll give thanks and really show it. (*open arms and spin around*)

If you’re forgiven and you know it, shout, “Praise God!”

(*stand and shout*)

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wonder questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

### 4. Coloring Page FM C

Hand out **GN 3** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture.

Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- ▼ I wonder, “What was Simon thinking?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What did the perfume smell like?”
- ▼ I wonder, “Did the woman’s hair tickle Jesus’ feet?”

**T** *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities such as squeezing your hands together, stretching, and so forth.*



## LOVING AND SERVING GOD

FA

Encourage each child to put away one toy or object. Invite the children to sit around a table or on the floor.

Sing “God Gives Us a Gift (Dios nos da un regalo)”—SCM 17— together while you serve the snack. Encourage the children to show gratitude or thanks when they are forgiven for something they have done wrong this week.

Say a litany and ask the children to respond with “Thank you, God”:

Thank you, God, for Jesus.

**Thank you, God.**

Thank you, God, for helping us know God’s ways.

**Thank you, God.**

Thank you, God, for forgiving us.

**Thank you, God.**

Help us to share your love and forgiveness with others.

**Thank you, God.**

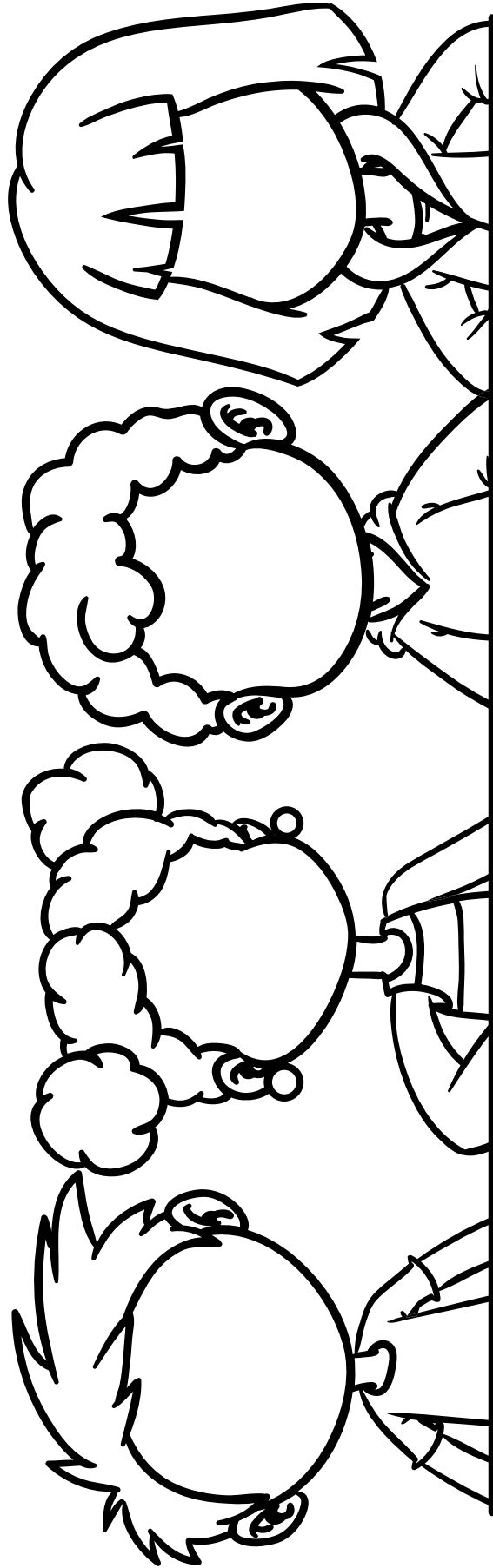
Amen.

As the children leave, bless each one: “(Name), give God thanks. The grace of God is with you.”



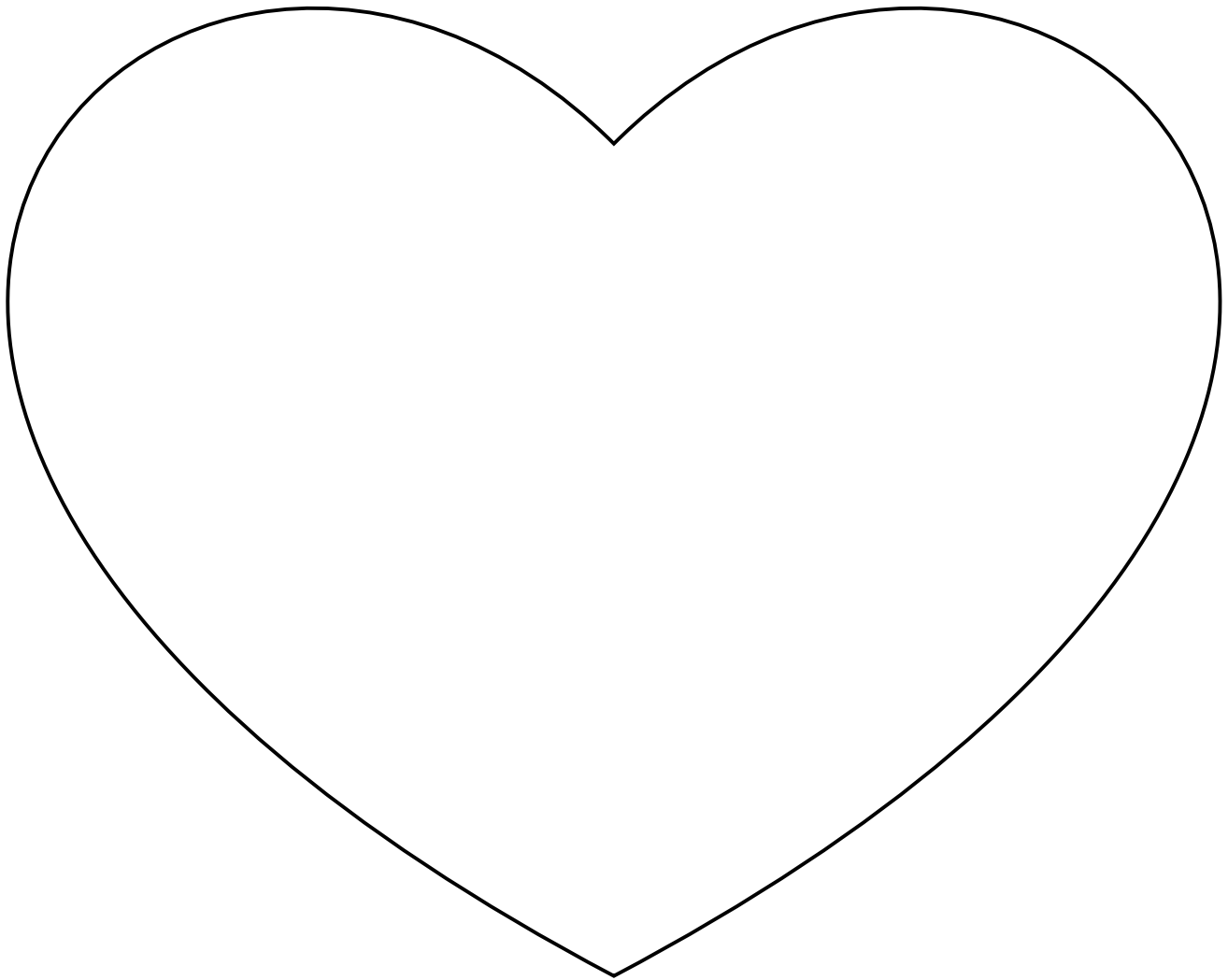
Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads), where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

Forgiveness  
makes us happy.









Thank you, God.

I love you.



# Forgiveness



**A woman thanks Jesus for forgiving her.**

