



Growing as followers of Jesus

Leaders Guide

Introduction: Jesus is God with Us. Jesus brings us God's forgiveness.

In this week we are exploring Jesus being God with us. There is so much you could talk about here, so many miracles and the whole of Easter is an important part as well. Many churches would prioritise the importance of Jesus dying for your sins and this would be a good week to talk about that but it needs to be in the bigger context. We will be exploring later what is sin and the Easter story.

The point we are trying to make here is the special relationship between God and Jesus, this is why Jesus is so important to us and someone we can trust.

Ideas for families:

- **Share some stories about when you did things and needed to be forgiven or when someone else did something that needed to be forgiven**
- **Write a forgiveness prayer together. Start with thinking about how we can be thankful that God forgives us and how Jesus helps us know God's forgiveness. Then write lines asking God for forgiveness either for things that we have done wrong, or for things that we know others have done wrong.**

Ideas for Congregations:

Gathering Idea –

- **People write something that they would like God to forgive them for on a piece of paper (small square about post-it note size)**
- **Have a bin out the front of the space. People come forward and scrunch or tear up the paper and put it in the bin. This can be seen as an offering, and as part of the time of confession.**
- **Here is a little story by Fishy Music - YouTube Is a great song to teach about God's forgiveness. This is a sample of it.**

BIBLE READINGS:

- **Matthew 1: 18-24**
- **Mark 2:1-12**
- **John 20:26-28**





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Heart of the Story (Everyone Chat):

Before Jesus was born, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph that Jesus would be special. In fact, it is so special, that Jesus would be called "Immanuel" which means that God is with us. After Jesus had died on the cross and risen back to life, he appeared to his disciples and they recognised that he was God – and even though it is bit confusing, we call Jesus 'God's son' because we do not really know how to explain how God can be God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit at the same time and still be one God. However, we know that Jesus helps us understand what God is like. God is love and part of God's love is that God is forgiving. We know this because Jesus forgave people their sin, and only God can forgive sin. If God forgives our sin, how much should we forgive other people who sin against us?

Activities:

- **PRAY** – If there are things that you feel sorry about and would like to change, pray and ask God to forgive you. As it says in 1 John 1: 9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
- **Forgiveness To-Do List** – Ephesians 4: 32 says, "Be kind and tender to one another. Forgive one another, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done." Forgiving other people can be hard. Write a list of people who you need to forgive. Go down your list, and for each person pray, 'God, help me to forgive...'. Then say that person's name and, "I forgive you."

Outcomes:

- **Recognise that the Bible tells us that Jesus is God with us**
- **Identify how the Bible tells us that God forgives us when we confess our sin**
- **Reflect on how we need to be forgiving of other people because God has forgiven us**





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Who is Jesus?

God with us

Name of
the Book

Chapter

Verse

MARK 2 6-10

6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralysed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

Getting ready!

Have you ever had to forgive someone? Was it easy or hard? Were you able to forgive them straight away?

Today we are reflecting on Jesus being God with us and bringing God's forgiveness to us.



While Jesus was on earth, he did a lot of amazing things that can be hard to believe that a human being is able to do. As Christians we believe that Jesus was not just a human but also God, Jesus becoming human is part of the way we know how much God loves us. God was so committed to help us understand that love that God became human. An important part of becoming human is that God knows what it is like to be human too and that while sometimes people have good intentions and try our best, sometimes we hurt other people. Sometimes we do it on purpose and sometimes by accident. God understands this through Jesus and offers us a second chance to do things differently to act in love. All we must do to be forgiven is say sorry and try not to do it again and even if we mess it up God will continue to forgive us, hoping always that we will be able to act in love. It is through Jesus sacrifice that we know God's forgiveness happens.

PRAISING GOD!

Thankyou loving God that you forgive us for the things we do wrong whether on purpose or by accident. Help us to understand the important of a life lived in forgiveness and love. Amen

SORRY GOD,

there have been times when we have hurt others, sometimes we mean to when we are angry and hurt and sometimes, we do not even realise when we do hurt others. We are sorry. Help us to remember the difference love can make and help us to offer forgiveness and love to all we meet. Amen



Draw or write about a time when you have had to say sorry to someone for something.

Find the hidden code by crossing out all the letters ...

A, Z, X

GAZXOXZAD
WZZXIXATZXA
UAXZZSAZXA

TELLING OTHERS!

What does it feel like to be forgiven? Share with someone how you felt after God has forgiven you, just like Jesus promised.

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

Ask people about how they know about God's forgiveness.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Think about your Forgiveness To-Do list. Keep your list somewhere and look at it during the week. Work down the list and ask God to help you forgive each person. Then say, "I forgive you..."

BLESSING

Think of the times you have been forgiven by God and other people. It is not easy to forgive sometimes, think of the love it has taken for God and other to forgive you. Give thanks.

