

# You Don't Owe Me

**Bible:**

**Bottom Line:** I choose peace by choosing to forgive.

**Memory Verse:** "So let us do all we can to live in peace. And let us work hard to build up one another." Romans 14:19, NIV

**Life App:** Peace—choosing to care more about each other than being right.

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what

**Social: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)****Early Arriver**

- Children's Books with forgiveness themes, such as:  
*Berenstain Bears: The Forgiving Tree* by Jan and Mike Berenstain  
*The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown  
*The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss

**Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)**

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

**Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)****9:00 & 11:30****Forgiveness is Freedom**

- No supplies needed

**10:15****Weighted Down**

- "Weighted Down" Activity Page; 10 weights for each kid
- "Henry's Choices" Activity Page; 1 for each kid
- A heavy backpack and an empty backpack
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons

**Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)**

- Index cards
- Pencils
- Dark markers

**Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)**

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## **Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's Bible Truth.

*Before kids arrive, pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to help kids realize the great forgiveness God has made available to them. Pray that they would fully embrace the love He has offered them and be excited to share it with others.*

### **All Service Times**

#### **Early Arriver Idea**

**What You Need:** Children's books with forgiveness themes

#### **What You Do:**

- Show the kids the books you brought. Read one or two books aloud to the group or choose a child to read aloud if someone is willing.
- After reading each book, discuss the following questions:
  - Who needed to be forgiven in this story?
  - Why? What happened?
  - Did forgiveness happen in this story? How so?

We're going to discover more about forgiveness and what Jesus would and did do when it comes to forgiving.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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## Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

### GETTING READY

#### 1. Opener/Closer

**What You Need:**

- Host
- 3 Volunteers
- Three cardstock or cardboard signs that say: "VERY DRAMATIC CONSEQUENCES" (one word per sign), strung with yarn to hang around volunteer's necks
- 2 drop cloths
- 2 bags of sunflower seeds (to play the part of broccoli seeds)
- 2 bags of soil
- 2 spray water bottles
- 2 large pots
- 20+ small plastic spoons
- Giant, cooked broccoli stalk

#### 2. Bible Truth

**What You Need:**

- Historyteller

#### 3. Worship

**What You Need:**

- Power Praise Team

*Music and Sound Effects (SFX):*

- "God is For Us"
- "Raise Your Hands"
- "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"

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## **Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)**

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**CG: Theme Slide**

*Host is on stage, welcoming the kids as they enter.*

### **Opener**

**HOST:** "Hey, everybody! Happy October! Isn't this just about the BEST month of the year? It's finally starting to get cool at night, the baseball playoffs are shaping up, and we've got all that CANDY to look forward to at the end of the month. And right now, we have praise and worship to look forward to. Help me welcome the Power Praise Team!"

**HOST:** "It's game time folks! I have a great game for us today!!"

**SFX: "Try Everything" instrumental**

"We're going to play—a little game I like to call 'Use It or Lose It.'

**CG: Use It or Lose It Theme Slide**

"It's very simple, really. I will present two lucky contestants with an opportunity. One contestant will be victorious. But for the other contestant, there will be very dramatic consequences!

**SFX: Drama Button**

*Three volunteers enter, with dramatic faces, holding their VERY DRAMATIC CONSEQUENCES signs. Then they exit.*

"In today's edition of our game, we're going to do a little fall planting. Yes, that's right. I said FALL planting. Everybody knows you've got to take care of your plants. Let me get two entire small groups up here on stage to play 'Use It or Lose It'!

*Bring two small groups up on stage.*

“All right! [SGL’s name]’s and [other SGL’s name]’s, it’s time for you to make the most of your opportunity to plant a nice, juicy crop of . . . BROCCOLI. Your job is to pick three kids from your small group and work together to plant these seeds. (*Hold up the bags of sunflower seeds.*) Each group has a bag of seeds, a bag of soil, a spray water bottle, and a pot. (*Reference each item.*) We’re going to see which group can create the most beautiful, most professionally planted pot full of seeds in 30 seconds. And you won’t have a shovel or a trowel—just these plastic spoons.

*Hand each person in the group a small plastic spoon.*

“I’ll be judging you on speed as well as tidiness. So do your very best! Remember, the winning group gets the glory. The other group will receive . . .

**SFX: Drama button**

“. . . very dramatic consequences!”

*Three volunteers enter with the signs. They exit.*

“This is your big chance to ‘Use It or Lose It!’ (*To audience*) You guys cheer them on. We’ve got 30 seconds on the clock, aaaaaaaand go!

**SFX: “Try Everything” instrumental** (*or other upbeat game music*)

*The two groups try to plant their seeds in their pots (on top of the drop cloth). Host comments on the action.*

**SFX: Buzzer** (*after 30 seconds*)

“Great job, contestants! (*Ad lib similar to the following based on what your kids did.*) Let’s see which one of you made the most of your broccoli challenge. [SGL’s name]’s group, you definitely got some seeds planted, but it looks like a wild boar might have gotten into them. It’s little messy. [Other SGL’s name], your broccoli bucket looks exquisite.

“[SGL’s name]’s group, you are today’s champions! Which means that [other SGL’s name]’s group, you must face very dramatic consequences.

**SFX: Drama Button**

*The three volunteers enter, with dramatic faces and signs, and one carries a giant, cooked broccoli stalk.*

“Your leader must spend the rest of large group eating this very large stalk of broccoli! Yum!

“How about a hand for both of our small groups? You guys can have a seat.

*Both groups go back to their seats.*

“That was awesome. Fall is a really fun time. In October, there are SO many great things happening

right now that you don't even want to blink, or you'll miss 'em! For the past four weeks we've been talking about, what's that word?

**CG: Peace Slide**

"Peace! Yeah, and peace is choosing to care more about others than being right. We really don't want you to miss this because choosing peace changes so much about our lives and how we see the world. It's not an easy sunshine and rainbow every day choice. It's a hard choice to make sometimes because feelings are always involved and feelings can make things messy. That's why we should always look to God's truth as our example of how to act. Help me welcome [Historyteller's Name] to show us one more place we can look, in the Bible, for an example of how Jesus chose peace, and how we can choose peace also."

*Historyteller enters as Host exits.*

**SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH**

**HISTORYTELLER:** "A couple of weeks ago we talked about a guy names Peter. He was one of Jesus' best friends. They spent a lot of time together. Jesus' actions and words were getting through to Peter and many others—they were understanding that He truly was the Son of God! But not everyone believed that, and they certainly weren't happy about what Jesus said about Himself. Jesus tried to prepare His disciples for the future, explaining to them that He would not be with them for much longer."

"Do you remember how Peter protested and said he would follow Jesus anywhere—that he would give his life for Jesus. But Jesus knew that Peter wasn't going to live up to his words. What did Jesus tell Peter he would do three times before the rooster crowed?"

*When the correct answer is given, play the audio clip.*

**SFX: "Jesus' Words to Peter" Clip**

**ROUND THREE: THE MISSION**

"Yeah, Peter denied that he knew Jesus. Peter told Jesus that would never happen—that he would never deny Jesus, but everything happened just as Jesus said it would. Peter denied knowing Him three times. And the third time ...

**SFX: Rooster Crowing**

"Okay, things are starting to get a little serious here."

"Because, you see, things got worse after that ... much worse. Jesus was accused of things He didn't even do. He was beaten, whipped, stabbed and crucified on a rough wooden cross.

**CG: The Cross Slide**

"He hung there, high on a hill in the dust and heat, listening to people call him names, spit at him, make fun of him and call him crazy, until ... well, He died. He did nothing, absolutely nothing to deserve even a small part of what happened to him. That would make most of us very angry. Has anyone ever gotten mad at you and shouted 'I'm not your friend anymore?'

“Yeah, well, do you know what Jesus said, right before He died? *(Pause for answers)* Luke tells us in chapter 23 verse 34 of his book in the bible. Jesus said “Father,” that’s what Jesus called God, “Father, forgive them.”

Wow! Talk about peaceful. Forgive them. He didn’t say, hurt them, or forget them, or I hate you all, or you’re not my friend. No, he said forgive them. He chose to show them all how much he cared for them by forgiving them.”

### **WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “If he had chosen not to forgive, you and I would not be able to have the relationship that we have God. We wouldn’t be able to say that because we choose Jesus as our Lord and savior we get to go to Heaven when we die. Jesus knew that. Jesus had every right to be angry but instead He was able to choose peace. He was able to love others by forgiving them. He showed us that sometimes choosing peace is choosing to forgive others, even when they might not deserve it or even be sorry.”

But choosing to forgive is more about you than it is the person or people that hurt you. It’s so that God can still love others through your kindness, your compassion, your love. If you can’t forgive, you can’t do any of that.”

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

**[Impress]** “I choose to care about others by choosing to forgive. Let’s pray and ask Him for courage and wisdom on how to do it!

### **Pray**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “God, thank You for not giving up on Peter and for not giving up on us. Thank you Jesus for showing us that You love us and You came to forgive us. You made a way for us to have peace with God! Help us to choose peace by choosing to forgive others, even when they might not even be sorry for what happened. In Your name, we pray. Amen.”

“If you have an offering with you today go ahead and bring that on up to the bucket.”

“Now, up on your feet while we welcome the Power Praise team in here!”

*Power Praise team enters as Historyteller exits.*

### **Worship**

**POWER PRAISE:** “Wow, today is already off to a great start. Make sure you’re up on your feet. We are singing to the God who created this world! Let’s praise Him together. Sing along with me.

**SFX: “God is For Us”**

“Woo-hoo! Keep that excitement going with this next song!”

**SFX: “Raise Your Hands”**

“Great job. During this next song I want you to think about how God made you on purpose and for a specific purpose. When we get so mixed up with jealousy, anger, or unforgiveness, we can lose sight of that purpose and start to feel alone and far away from God. Use this song to talk with God and ask him to help you stay focused on Him and to thank Him for making you exactly how He needs you to be.”

**SFX:** “*Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*”

“Amazing. It is always amazing to see you all worship God the way that you do and to open up to Him and talk with Him. Have a great week and we will see you again real soon.”

*Power Praise exits as Host enters.*

### **Closer**

**HOST:** “I know people say it all the time but, it is so true; Jesus is AMAZING. We’ve seen him choose peace with an angry mob, with his friends who betrayed him, and now with people who killed him. Wow! He really shows us how serious He is about our memory verse. Read it with me.”

**CG:** *Memory Verse Slide*

“It says: “So let us do all we can to live in peace. And let us work hard to build up one another.” Romans 14:19, NIV.”

“This is a simple verse to say—I bet you all have it almost memorized! But even if it’s easy to remember, it’s not always simple to put into practice. We are supposed to choose peace even when our emotions might be all wacky.”

“If peace is choosing to care about others more than being right then that means that no matter what we *feel*, we are supposed to stop thinking about ourselves and do whatever it takes to keep or make peace between us and others. Sometimes that means that we have to choose to forgive, even if we are right about something. We get to choose to care about others by choosing to forgive. I promise you, when you start forgiving people, even when they don’t apologize, it makes you feel better inside and it lets you stay closer to God because you aren’t distracted. Being angry with people can distract you and that just gets in the way of our relationship with God. Say the bottom line with me.”

**CG:** *Bottom Line Slide*

**HOST and KIDS:** [*Bottom Line*] “I Choose peace by choosing to forgive.”

**HOST:** “Yes! You guys will hear more about what that looks like in your small groups. Have fun, and we’ll see you next time!”

*Dismiss children to their Small Groups.*

**CG:** *Small Group Slide*



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## Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Truth applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**9:00 & 11:30**

### Cause and Effect

**What You Need:** "Cause Statements" and "Effect Statements" Activity Pages, pens, blank cause and effect cards

### What You Do:

- Talk to the kids about the relationship between cause and effect. Give the following example: "You are careful to brush your teeth twice a day, so you don't have cavities when you go see your dentist." The cause—brushing your teeth twice a day—leads to the effect of no cavities.
- Let a couple volunteers come up with their own cause and effect statements.
- Shuffle the "Cause Statements" and lay them face down in a stack in the center of your small group area. Do the same with the "Effect Statements."
- Let the kids take turns drawing a "Cause Statement" to read aloud and then work together to find the matching "Effect Statement". Answers are below.

Answer key:

#### Cause

You get plenty of rest.

You study all of your spelling words.

You spend time reading every night.

You're a good friend to others.

You practice at the batting cages.

You choose healthy foods.

You drink lots of water during the game.

You practice your handwriting each night.

You forget your gloves and hat.

You stay on your tablet too long.

#### Effect

You have lots of energy the next day.

You make a 100 on your spelling test.

You finish your first chapter book in a week.

You have good friends to play with.

You knock the ball out of the park at your next game.

Your body is strong and healthy.

You don't get dehydrated or feel lightheaded.

Your teacher compliments your penmanship.

Your hands and head freeze at the bus stop.

You lose the privilege of playing on your tablet for a week.

### What You Say:

"You did a great job matching up our cause-and-effect statements today. There's a cause-and-effect relationship between being forgiven and forgiving others. The cause—God has forgiven you—leads to the effect—that you can forgive others. When you understand that relationship, creating peace through forgiveness becomes much easier. **[Bottom Line]** I choose peace by choosing to forgive. When it's

hard to forgive, I want you to ask yourself 'What would Jesus do.' Because what he did was say Father forgive them. **[Bottom Line] I choose peace by choosing to forgive.**"

### 10:15

#### Weighted Down

**What You Need:** "Weighted Down" Activity Page, "Henry's Choices" Activity Pages, glue sticks, crayons, differently weighted backpacks

#### What You Do:

- Set the backpacks out and invite kids to take turns picking them up. (You may have to guide them to take turns or call kids up one at a time.)
- Ask kids if any of them have heavy backpacks that they take to school every day. Does anyone walk to school wearing a big backpack? What about kids who ride the bus? Is it difficult to climb the stairs of the bus with a heavy backpack on?
- Tell kids that when somebody won't forgive someone else for something, it's like they have a heavy backpack to carry and they feel weighted down. It's hard to do anything if you're carrying all that weight.
- Then give each kid 10 weights and a "Henry's Choices" Activity Page.
- Read Henry's forgiveness choices (below) one at a time.
- For each situation, let kids decide if they think it would be hard to forgive or if they think they could forgive pretty easily.
- For the ones they think would be difficult, they can glue a weight on or near Henry's backpack.
- For the choices they think they could forgive pretty easily, they should glue the weight near his feet.
- Encourage kids to make their own choices. Tell them it's okay if they don't think it'd be easy to forgive in every situation. As kids make their choices, you can ask them why they feel the way they do. But be careful that the activity doesn't take so long that they get bored or become disengaged.
- Allow kids to color their pictures once you've gone through all the choices.

#### Henry's Choices:

- While Henry was trying to go down the slide, his friend kept climbing up the slide and blocking him from going down.
- Henry's grandpa promised that he would play ball with him when he came over, but he got too busy talking to the adults.
- Henry's sister knocked down the LEGO® creation he had been working on for two days.
- Henry's dad told him he wasn't allowed to play outside with his friends one afternoon.
- When his friends were throwing rocks on the playground, Henry's teacher punished him too even though he didn't throw any rocks. She said she was sorry.
- Henry's mom gave some of his toys away and he didn't get to pick which ones.
- Henry's dog tore up the pages of his favorite book.
- Henry's baby brother cried all night and kept Henry awake.
- Henry's friend didn't pick him to play on the basketball team at recess.

**What You Say:**

“Could you imagine if Henry didn’t forgive at all? His backpack would have been way too heavy to carry. When we choose not to forgive, it weighs our hearts down just like it weighed down his backpack. The good news is we can always make the choice to show others forgiveness like we’ve received from God! **[Make It Personal]** *(Tell kids about a time when you didn’t want to forgive, but then you remembered how much forgiveness God has shown you and you asked yourself ‘What would Jesus do.’)* **[Bottom Line]** I choose peace by choosing to forgive.”

**All Service Times****Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)****[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]***Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application***What You Need:** Index cards, pencils, dark markers**What You Do:**

- Pass out an index card and a pencil to each kid in your group.
- Encourage the kids to think of someone they need to forgive and write that person’s name on their card. Remind them that no one else will see what they write.
- Ask the kids to hold the cards to their chest so the name is covered as you pray.
- When you finish praying, encourage the kids to write their own name over the name on their card. They should make sure to write their name in large letters so that it completely covers the original name.

**What You Say:**

“Let’s pray. God, we love You. Thanks for reminding us today that we can forgive because You have forgiven us. We don’t want to be so distracted by our anger that we miss spending quality time with you. Help us to remember that we ALL need forgiveness and that you give it, always. In Jesus’ name, amen.

“I had you cover up the other person’s name with your own name to remind you that everyone needs forgiveness, even you. You are no different than the person on your card. Now take a dark marker and draw a cross, covering up both names. This is to remind you that God’s forgiveness covers anyone who chooses to follow Him. *(Allow time for kids to draw a cross.)* So remember this week: **[Bottom Line]** I choose peace by choosing to forgive.”

*Parent Cue*