

David Forgave his Bad Enemies

Dear Lord, use this study to help the children love and forgive others who wrong them, in Jesus name, Amen.

Choose activities that fit the children's ages and needs. Do them in any order you want.

1. Read or tell by memory how David forgave his enemy Saul (1 Samuel 24:1-22).

- Prepare ahead of an older child time to read or tell this story by memory.
- Before telling the story, ask the children to listen carefully to discover in what way David responded honorably to his enemies.
- After telling the story, ask the children:
 - ✓ What did the bad King Saul want to do to David?
 - ✓ What opportunity did David have, to kill his enemy king Saul?
 - ✓ Did David take revenge on his enemy?
 - ✓ Did David try by force to make himself king of Israel?
 - ✓ What kind of person did Saul say David was, after David spared his life?
 - ✓ Why did Saul feel bad, after trying to kill David?



When David could have harmed King Saul, he spared his life.

2. Dramatize David forgiving Saul (1 Samuel chapter 24).

- Rehearse the drama to present it to the adults during the worship time.
- Let this practice be a teaching time for the children.
- If possible, let one or two men join the children and act as soldiers.
- If children can imagine what Saul, David, or the soldiers said, then do not limit what they say to what is written below. Let the children add in their own words what they think Saul or David said.

- Actors do not need to memorize lines: read them, as the aim is not to perform but to relive sacred events.
- Let older children help prepare younger ones.
- After presenting the drama, let children ask the adults questions about it. They might ask the same questions as listed above, under #1.
- Older children (or men) play these parts:

Saul Wear a blanket or sheet as a 'robe'.

David Prepare a sword made of wood or cardboard, and a piece of cloth the same color as Saul's robe. Hide this cloth in your hand until you pretend to cut off a piece of Saul's robe with the sword.

Younger children play these parts:

Saul's soldiers (An adult or older child might also be a soldier of Saul or David.)

David's soldiers

David and David's soldiers

(Hide from Saul. Crouch down low behind chairs that represent bushes, on one side of the room.)

Saul: *(Lead your soldiers near to where David is hiding, but look the other way. Shout,)*
"Listen, my brave soldiers! I hate David. People admire him more than me! But I am King Saul! Go find David and kill him! Now! Kill him!"

Saul's soldiers: *(Salute King Saul and shout.)* "Yes, Sir!"
(Some say) "Yes, your royal highness."
(Others say) "We will kill him!"
(Others say) "I think we should go this way. Come!"
(All of Saul's soldiers march away from where David and his soldiers are hiding. Walk around looking for David. Saul stays where he is.)

Saul *(Take off your robe and set it beside you. Sit facing away from the robe and close your eyes. Let your head tilt down as though asleep.)*

David's soldiers *(Some say)* "David, look!"
(Others say) "Your enemy king Saul is resting."
(Others say) "Go kill him."

David *(Walk quietly behind Saul, with your sword in hand.)*

David's soldiers *(Some say)* "Kill him! Quickly!"
(Others say) "He is your enemy."

David "No. I will not kill him.
He is God's anointed ruler over the people of Israel."

David's soldiers *(Some say)* "Kill him! Now!"
(Others say) "Kill him while you have the chance!"

David *(Pretend to cut off a piece of Saul's robe.)*

*Show the piece hidden in your hand.
Return to your soldiers, then call loudly to Saul.
“Look, my King! A piece of your robe, in my hand!
I cut it off, but I did not kill you. See that I am not guilty of rebellion.
I have not wronged you, but you hunt me to kill me.”*

Saul *“Is that you, David my son? Oh, I am sorry!”
(Wipe tears from your eyes.)
“You are more righteous than I.
You treated me well, but I have treated you badly.
God put me into your hands, but you did not kill me.
Now I know that you will surely be king over Israel.”*

3. Let older children create poems and songs about forgiving others.

4. Memory work.

Small children memorize Matthew 5:44:

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Older children memorize Galatians 5:22 & 23: *“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”*

5. Poem. Three children each recite a verse from Psalm 15, verses 1, 2 and 3.

6. Read about heaven in Revelation 7:9-17, where we will wear white robes.

- Draw a robe like the one shown here and let the children copy it.



- Explain: The robe illustrates how God wants to clothe us with his holiness and love. God will give to us white robes that signify how he has made us to be holy, pure and good in his sight.

7. Have an older child pray:

Dear Lord, you want us to be holy like you are, full of purity and love. Help us learn from David’s example the kind of persons you want us to be by the power of Your Spirit. Forgive us our sins and help us forgive other people as David did. Amen.

A more detailed drama to act out: Jesus told Peter how to forgive others:
<http://biblestoryskits.com/014-jesus-tells-peter-how-many-times-to-forgive-2/>



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