

Family Faith

Chapter 17

Jesus Forgives

Jesus forgives us when we are sorry.

Chapter Summary

The Gospel story of Zacchaeus teaches us about God's mercy and forgiveness. Zacchaeus makes bad choices, and he seeks Jesus, who is merciful and forgiving. We too should be sorry for our sins and seek Jesus, who will always be merciful and forgiving. We should forgive others as Jesus forgives us.

More for Parents

It is a reality that our children are going to sin! It would be naïve to think that they will never make poor choices. One of the best gifts that we can give to our children is to teach them about God's unconditional love, and the best way we can teach this is by the example of our own unconditional love. God is not frustrated or stumped by our sins. His mercy and grace are standing by ready to forgive us and heal us. What a gift to teach children early and often that God does not want to condemn us in our sin, but he wants to free us from our sin. When our children make mistakes, we want to help them to avoid sin but also teach them to not feel despair or unworthy of God's love. Forgiveness is freely offered by God, who wants to rescue us from sin and heal us with his grace.

Our Family Prays Together

Dear God, thank you for wanting to rescue us from sin and fill us with your life and love. Help us to know your love and to accept this gift from you always! Amen.

Let's Talk about It as a Family

- **What did Jesus forgive Zacchaeus for doing?** (*Stealing money.*)
- **What should we do when we have done something wrong?** (*Say that we are sorry.*)
- **What does Jesus do when we tell him that we are sorry for making a bad choice?** (*He forgives us.*)
- Jesus forgave Zacchaeus. **Should we forgive someone who has hurt us?** (*Yes.*)
- **Who will help us to be forgiving, even when it is difficult for us to do?** (*Jesus.*)
- **When we are able to forgive others, does that help us to open our hearts to God's forgiveness?** (*Yes.*)

Let's Live Our Faith

As a family, discuss forgiving one another. Use this as an opportunity to talk about times that you may have not forgiven each other, and times that you may have not said you were sorry.

Family Faith Activities

Choose one or more of the following to do as a family:

- One of the best ways to counter sin in our lives is by practicing virtue. Choose a virtue to practice each week; give examples to your children and praise them when they practice virtue. You may even want to make a game out of it (even include parents!). Virtues to practice may include patience, kindness, piety (reverence in Mass), generosity, or self-control.
- Read and discuss the Small Wonders story as a family at www.wordoflifeseries.org/parents.

For more family faith formation resources go to www.wordoflifeseries.org/parents.

Small Wonders



Pinnetti the Puppet finds a balloon that has an unfortunate meeting with Brambles' sharp quills.

Read the full Small Wonders story at www.wordofliferies.org/parents.