

Building Family Relationships Lesson 4

Scripture: Genesis 37:3, 4, 17b-20, 23, 24, 28; 42:6, 8; 45:3-5, 15

Bible Memory: Colossians 3:12-14


Focus: ♥ God wants us to forgive family members.



Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

Where do you rate on the forgiveness scale of Matthew 18:21, 22? Do you forgive someone once, twice, seven times, or do you have a limit? Think about your family—the family you live with and your family in the body of Christ. Take a few minutes to read and pray Colossians 3:12-14 while thinking about these people. As God’s Spirit makes you aware of hurts, annoyances, or challenges, choose to forgive these people from your heart. Trust God with the results, and look for His blessings.

Lesson 4 at a Glance

<p>1 FOCUS IN Use one or more of these activities to help students explore times that conflicts occur in families.</p>	<p> Quick Step Baker Family Conflicts</p> <p> Option Family Conflicts</p>	<p>HeartShaper Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources CD • none 	<p>Other Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CD player • paper, pencils, colored pencils, markers
<p>2 EXPLORE HIS WORD Use these activities to help students tell how Joseph responded to family conflicts.</p>	<p> Bible Exploration Genesis 37:3, 4, 17b-20, 23, 24, 28; 42:6, 8; 45:3-5, 15</p> <p> Bible Memory Colossians 3:12-14</p> <p> Optional Bible Skill Builder</p>	<p>• “Brother Trouble” reproducible page, <i>Activities</i> for lesson 4</p> <p>• Resources sheet 2</p> <p>• Resources CD Optional Bible Skills 4 printable file</p>	<p>• whiteboard, dry-erase marker, Bibles, highlighter, pencils</p> <p>• Bibles</p> <p>• Bibles; yellow crepe paper; black, broad-tip, permanent marker</p>
<p>3 MAKE IT REAL Use one of these activities to help students discover what the Bible says about offering forgiveness.</p>	<p> Quick Step What Does the Bible Say?</p> <p> Option Paper Airplanes and Forgiveness</p>	<p>• Activities for lesson 4</p> <p>• none</p>	<p>• Bibles, pencils</p> <p>• paper, pennies, clear tape, Bibles</p>
<p>4 LIVE IT OUT Use one of these activities to help students choose to forgive family members.</p>	<p> Quick Step God Forgave, I Forgive</p> <p> Option Choose to Forgive</p>	<p>• Activities for lesson 4</p> <p>• none</p>	<p>• pencils</p> <p>• long length of roll paper, markers, reusable adhesive</p>

Focus In (10-15 minutes)

- 1 Use one or more of these activities to help students **explore times that conflicts occur in families.**

Welcome

- Welcome each student by name.
- Early arrivers will enjoy doing one or more of the additional activities described on the unit page.

Quick Step Baker Family Conflicts

SAY: **Let's listen in to a typical day at the Baker home. Unfortunately, a typical day for this family is one filled with conflict. Whenever you hear a conflict the Baker family is having, do the sign for *conflict*.** Show students how to do this: the index fingers start to come together but go past each other, forming a wide X. Let students practice the sign. Play track 1. Since there are lots of conflicts in the skit, students will be making the sign a lot. When the skit is finished . . .

ASK: **When do conflicts occur in families?** (when a family argues about money, when there are misunderstandings and a lack of communication, when changes happen in the family, when kids want more independence, when there are differences of opinions about allowances, when there are arguments about what activities to do as a family, when there are arguments about phones and computers, when it seems that one kid is favored over another)

SAY: **Conflicts happen in all families. Let's dig into God's Word to learn about a family that went through a lot of conflicts and find out what happened.**

Option Family Conflicts

ASK: **What are some conflicts that occur in families?** You may want to summarize ideas on the board. (when a family argues about money, when there are misunderstandings and a lack of communication, when changes happen in the family, when kids want more independence, when there are differences of opinions about allowances, when there are arguments about what activities to do as a family, when there are arguments about phones and computers, when it seems that one kid is favored over another)

SAY: **Working alone or with a partner, draw a family that is having a conflict. You can draw one scene or a few scenes. Use speech balloons and write what the family members are saying to each other.** Distribute supplies. Give preteens time to work on this. When students are done, let volunteers share their family-conflicts drawings.

SAY: **Conflicts happen in all families. Let's dig into God's Word to learn about a family that went through a lot of conflicts and find out what happened.**

Focus

♥ God wants us to forgive family members.

Materials

Resources CD track 1,
CD player



Tech Tip

Go online to see examples of how to do the sign in American Sign Language.

Teaching Tip

Continue to display the Poster for the Quarter (*Resources* sheet 1).



Consider finding a picture of a dad and 2 daughters so that students have a visual to connect with what they're hearing.

Materials

paper, pencils, colored pencils, markers (optional: whiteboard, dry-erase marker)



Focus

♥ God wants us to forgive family members.

Explore His Word (25 minutes)

2 Use these activities to help students **tell how Joseph responded to family conflicts.**

Bible Background for the Teacher

The account of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37–47 provides some powerful lessons on God’s plan for dealing with sibling conflict. Joseph’s life relates the destructive power of jealousy that, unchecked, led to hatred, evil schemes, slander, and vengeance (see Genesis 37:4, 17b–20). The downward spiral of sin continued as Joseph’s brothers stole his clothes, terrified him by holding him captive in a cistern, and sold him to traders heading to another country.

But the beauty of the story is in Joseph’s attitudes and behavior. Joseph was willing to trust and obey God, even forgiving his brothers. Joseph allowed God to humble him, train him, and utilize him—not for himself but for God’s long-term plan for the nation of Israel. And in the end, Joseph got his family back.

Joseph provides us with an illustration of God’s sovereignty, grace, and power to build or rebuild strong relationships that honor God. Joseph:

- acknowledged that God was with him (Genesis 39:21–23; 45:5–9).
- obediently trusted God’s plan (Genesis 41:16, 28–32).
- forgave and made amends with his brothers (Genesis 45:3–5, 14, 15).
- enjoyed God’s blessings (Genesis 41:41–49).

Materials

whiteboard, dry-erase marker, Bibles, 5 copies of “Brother Trouble” reproducible page, highlighter (highlight 1 character’s role on each copy), *Activities* for lesson 4, pencils



Notes

See the teacher contents page for the location of reproducible pages. The reproducible page is also provided on the *Resources* CD.

The Scripture text is provided on the *Resources* CD in both the *New International Version* and the *King James Version*, if you want preteens to read from the same Bible version.

How to Say It

Dothan	<i>Doe-thun</i>
Ishmaelites	<i>Ish-may-el-ites</i>
Midianite	<i>Mid-ee-un-ite</i>
shekels	<i>shek-els</i>

Bible Exploration Genesis 37:3, 4, 17b–20, 23, 24, 28; 42:6, 8; 45:3–5, 15

SAY: As we read together from the book of Genesis, listen for a family who went through a lot of conflicts—big conflicts. Listen for what the family members did and what happened. Ask students to turn in their Bibles to Genesis 37. Write on the board the verse numbers that students will read. Have volunteers read the verses aloud.

Ask for five volunteers who would like to read and be in a skit. Give them each a copy of “Brother Trouble,” which is based on events in Joseph’s life. As the volunteers look over their parts, tell the rest of the class to listen for the conflicts Joseph and his family had. Have the volunteers read their parts and do some acting. When they’re finished, thank them for their participation.

ASK: What conflicts happened in Joseph’s family? (Joseph’s brothers hated him because their dad loved Joseph the most and had given him an ornate coat. Joseph had some dreams that made his brothers hate him even more. Joseph’s brothers stole his clothes, threw him into a cistern, and sold him into slavery.)

Have students turn in their leaflets to the activity Joseph and His Family. Do the page together, letting volunteers take turns reading the questions and answering them. (Answers: 1=a; 2=b; 3=b; 4=a; 5=b)

ASK: How did the brothers probably expect Joseph to respond to what they had done to him many years earlier? (They thought he would be angry with them and maybe kill them.)

How did Joseph respond to all the conflicts in his family? (The Bible doesn't say how Joseph responded when his brothers took his coat or threw him in the cistern or sold him into slavery. But we do know that Joseph continued to trust in God. Years later, when his brothers came to Egypt, Joseph forgave them and saved them from starvation by making sure they had plenty of grain. Joseph did this because he realized God was using what his brothers meant to be harmful to save lives.)

If you had been in Joseph's situation, how hard would it have been for you to forgive your brothers for all the terrible things they had done? Accept responses.

SAY: The story of Joseph's life is like some action movie that turns out really well. But it's not a made-up story—it really happened! Just imagine all those things happening to you: hated by your brothers, clothes stolen, thrown into a cistern, and sold into slavery. For many of us, our first thought would *not* have been to offer forgiveness. But that's what Joseph did. Joseph knew that ♥ God wants us to forgive family members. And because Joseph loved and served God, he knew that God had used all those terrible things for His purpose. That purpose was to get Joseph to Egypt so that one day he would become a great ruler and be able to store grain to save millions of people from starvation, including his own family. Let's keep thinking about what the Bible says about offering forgiveness.

Bible Memory Colossians 3:12-14

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Continue to display the Colossians 3:12-14 poster on a wall or bulletin board. Have preteens find Colossians 3:12-14 in their Bibles. Have a volunteer read the verses aloud. Then ask everyone to read the Bible Memory together.

ASK: Why are we to offer forgiveness to others? (because the Lord forgave us)

What is the one big thing we're to "put on"? (love)

Why is love the main thing we're to "put on"? (Without love it's hard to do the other things: showing compassion, being kind and patient, and forgiving others.)

Divide the class into three groups (or pairs), and assign each group one verse. **SAY: Work together and decide how you want to read your verse creatively. Maybe you'll want to emphasize some words. Maybe some words will be read by individuals while the rest are read by everyone. Maybe you'll want to say part of the verse in a different tone or volume.** Give preteens time to work on this. In verse order, have the groups creatively read the verses. Have the groups do it a couple of times. Then ask everyone to say all the verses together. **Because ♥ God wants us to forgive family members, let's do it, remembering how the Lord first forgave us.**

Materials

Resources sheet 2,
Bibles



Note

The Bible Memory in the *King James Version* is included on the Resources CD.

Optional Bible Skill Builder

Print and use the Resources CD Optional Bible Skills 4 printable file.



Focus

♥ God wants us to forgive family members.

Make It Real (10–15 minutes)

3 Use one of these activities to help students **discover what the Bible says about offering forgiveness.**

Materials

Activities for lesson 4,
Bibles, pencils



Quick Step What Does the Bible Say?

Have preteens stand. SAY: **Do these two things at the same time: tap your head and rub your stomach.** Let students do that for several seconds. **Now clap your hands while standing on one foot.** Let students do that for several seconds. **Now snap your fingers and nod your head.** Let students do that for several seconds. **Now stand on one foot, snap your fingers, and nod your head.** Let students try that for several seconds.

ASK: **How were these things a little bit like offering forgiveness?** (They all can be hard to do.)

Have students turn in their leaflets to the activity What Does the Bible Say About Forgiveness? Read the instructions. Let students work alone or in groups of two or three to complete the page. Encourage them to look up the Scriptures to fill in the blanks. When everyone is done, have volunteers read the situations and tell which Scripture reference they chose as most helpful for each situation. It's OK if preteens chose different Scriptures than what's given here. (Answers: 1=Mark 11; 2=Matthew 6; 3=Matthew 18; 4=Ephesians 4) SAY: **It sounds easy, but offering forgiveness to others can be hard. For some reason, it can be especially hard to offer forgiveness to family members. But remember, God cares about families. He cares deeply about how we treat those in our family, and ♥ God wants us to forgive family members—no matter how hard it can sometimes be.**

Materials

paper, pennies, clear
tape, Bibles



Option Paper Airplanes and Forgiveness

Distribute paper and tell preteens to each make a paper airplane. When everyone is ready, have a little competition to see whose plane flies the farthest. Then tell preteens to tape a penny onto one wing of their planes. Have them try the competition again.

ASK: **Why didn't your planes fly very well this time?** (The penny on one wing made the plane uneven and heavy.)

SAY: **When we don't forgive others, it can be like a weight we're carrying around that drags us down and keeps us from living the way God wants us to live. Let's see what the Bible says about offering forgiveness. Think about how these verses especially can help you forgive family members.** Divide the class into pairs (or small groups) and have each pair look up one of the Scriptures from the narrow column. Have a volunteer from each pair read its verse aloud. After each pair has read its verse . . .

ASK: **How could this Scripture help you when you need to forgive a family member?** Accept responses.

SAY: **God cares deeply about families. ♥ God wants us to forgive family members—no matter how hard it can sometimes be.**

Teaching Tip

If you have a small class, have individual students look up the verses.

Scriptures

Matthew 6:14, 15
Matthew 18:21, 22
Mark 11:25
Ephesians 4:32
Colossians 3:13



Be sure to provide support for students who have difficulty with folding and throwing.

Live It Out (10 minutes)

- 4 Use one of these activities to help students **choose to forgive family members**.

Focus

♥ God wants us to forgive family members.

Quick Step God Forgave, I Forgive

SAY: **Remember Joseph? If ever there was a guy who had a reason not to forgive his family members for what they had done to him, it would be Joseph. But as a follower of God, that was not an option for Joseph. He knew how important forgiving others is to God and that ♥ God wants us to forgive family members.** Ask students to turn in their leaflets to the activity God Forgave. **Now it's time for you to choose what you'll do. First, remember that God, in Jesus, forgave you.** Tell students to write "me" after the word "forgave." **When family members wrong you in some way and you need to forgive them, will you? If you choose to forgive family members or will start the process of forgiving them, sign your name on the cross above the word "will."** When students are done, ask them to look up Colossians 3:13 and tell what words they should write on the two blank lines to the right of the cross. (forgive, forgave) Encourage preteens to write those words on the blank lines.

Close with a time of prayer. Ask students to think of a family member they need to forgive. Maybe it's a family member they live with or one they don't see very often. Maybe it's a brother or a parent, or maybe it's a grandparent or cousin. SAY: **Pray silently, and ask God to help you forgive the family member you're thinking about.** After a brief time of silence, close in prayer. PRAY: **Dear God, thank You that in Jesus You forgive us. Thank You for forgiving us when we're selfish and when we don't obey our parents. Thank You for forgiving us when we lie and do things that hurt others. Help us to forgive family members who have wronged us in some way or hurt us. It's not easy, God, but please help us to offer the same loving forgiveness that You give to us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Option Choose to Forgive



Before class, draw on a long length of roll paper a large outline of a cross. Write the word "FORGIVE" both vertically and horizontally on the cross (see the narrow column). Display the paper on a wall.

SAY: **Remember Joseph? If ever there was a guy who had a reason not to forgive his family members for what they had done to him, it would be Joseph. But as a follower of God, that was not an option for Joseph. He knew how important forgiving others is to God and that ♥ God wants us to forgive family members.** Draw students' attention to the cross you've displayed. Point to the word "forgive" written vertically. **First, God, in Jesus, forgives us.** Point to the word "forgive" written horizontally. **Then, God wants us to forgive others, including family members.** If you choose to forgive family members or will start the process of forgiving them, go to the cross and write your name inside it. Give time for preteens to do this. Then ask everyone to gather by the cross for a time of prayer. Tell preteens that you'll offer a prayer that you would like them to pray after you. PRAY: **Dear God, thank You that in Jesus You forgive us.** Pause as students pray. **Help us to forgive family members.** Pause as students pray. **In Jesus' name, amen.**

Materials

Activities for lesson 4, pencils



Materials

long length of roll paper, markers, reusable adhesive



Live Wire

Distribute *Live Wire* to students before they leave. They will enjoy the articles, puzzles, and other features included in this fun student magazine.

Be sure parents know about the *Faith & Family* pages available online to print and use with their children at home. Go to www.heartshaper.com.

