



***Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way***

February 22, 2015

Narrative Lectionary



Matthew 18:15-35

Over and Over Again. *Object:* A large assortment of pencils with the erasers all worn off.

Just look at all of these pencils! There are short pencils, long pencils, skinny pencils, and fat pencils. There are yellow, red, black, and white pencils. There are many different shapes, sizes, and colors of pencils but there is one thing that all of these pencils have in common. The eraser is worn off of every one of them. Do you know what that tells me? It tells me that I make a lot of mistakes. When I make a mistake, I erase it and start over, and over again, until I get it right! I don't know why I keep these pencils, because as many mistakes as I make, a pencil without an eraser is pretty useless.

These pencils remind me of people. People come in all different sizes, shapes, and colors too, but we all have one thing in common, we all make mistakes! We make a lot of mistakes. That is why God sent Jesus to die on the cross -- to erase our mistakes. When we do something wrong, we can ask God to forgive us and because of Jesus, he will erase our mistakes and we can start over again, and again, and again. Unlike these pencils, God's eraser never wears out!

Just as God forgives us over and over again, Jesus taught us that we should forgive other people over and over again.

One day, Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive someone who sins against me? Should I forgive him seven times?" I imagine that Peter was pretty proud of himself for being willing to forgive someone seven times.

Jesus answered, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven times!"

I think Jesus knew that if he said we should forgive seventy times seven times, we would never be able to keep count and we would forgive over, and over again, just as he forgives us.

It doesn't matter if we are short or tall, skinny or fat, red, white, yellow, or black, we all need God's forgiveness. We also need to remember that Jesus taught that we are to forgive others just as God forgives us.

Dear Jesus, we all make mistakes, thank you for coming to erase those mistakes. Help us to forgive others the same way you forgive us -- over, and over, and over again. Amen.

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Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Alleluia (Matt. 4:4)

Word Search Puzzle

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A P T Z U H W J E S N N M H H
A W U K G T K E S X G X Q D X
H T K G T W U S M A N Y I D B
E K A J I B F U B C G E U K G
A F S T I M E S U K O O C U W
M W K W N B O T G P E T E R A
O P E R G R E L P W W O X H T
F A D X B R O T H E R G H X E
K O N A F X S D C R Z L Q W Y
X E R S V Q J L E I L O Z R Q
E Z B G W Q D Q D V O R K P H
E N Z Y I E J P Z L M D J I O
S W U Q H V R S E V E N A C W
W L B Q L L E E I I F W C A C
H U S I N S K T D C F X M T C
  
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PETER	ANSWERED	MANY	JESUS
SINS	FORGIVE	HOW	LORD
ASKED	TIMES	BROTHER	SEVEN

70 X 7 POPCORN MUNCHING: Let children each have a bowl and count out 70 pieces of popcorn from a big bowl, while talking about today's lesson and the 70 TIMES 7, to forgive someone! Children could be given 7 M&M's if desired too, etc.

FORGIVE ACROSTIC: On a chalkboard or a long piece of banner paper, write FORGIVE and then let children go to the board and write a word to describe our lesson word FORGIVE today! Let children discuss the new word and how THEY can forgive someone!

FORGIVE FLOWERS: Children can be given paper and markers and colorful "buttons" for the middle of the flowers (to glue on). Encourage children draw large flowers and then write F-O-R-G-I-V-E in each of the petals, so each flower should have 7 petals so one letter will fit on each petal! Give children some chenille wire for the stems, if desired.



"Help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me."

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