



THE BIG IDEA: Unshackle people from the prison of your bitterness and resentment, so that you might live in freedom.

BIBLE REFERENCE: Colossians 3:12-14

LESSON:

Intro: Hey kids, have you ever been in a situation where someone said or did something to you that made you upset...maybe a friend or family member? Did you let it go or did you hold it against them and stay upset for a long time? (If they stayed upset, ask how they showed the other person they were upset...ignoring, talking about them, etc). Compare the effort it takes staying upset to letting it go.

Group Activity - Materials needed: Jr High/High School assistant

Note: Before starting the activity, prep the assistant by explain that they are to be creative trying to get out, but not actually get out. Also remind them not to be so forceful as to injure the kids.

Break the kids into groups by age. Have them form a circle. Have a Jr. High/High School assistant stand in the middle of the circle. Explain to the kids that they have to hold hands/link arms, etc...to do whatever they can to keep the assistant from breaking out of the circle.

Connection: Was it easy or difficult to keep the assistant in the circle? What made it easy or difficult?

Application: It takes a lot of energy and focus to keep a prisoner contained. We might want to relax and let our guard down, but the reality is, we can never really do that because we always have to be paying attention to what our prisoner is doing. The same is true with unforgiveness. Unforgiveness is being unwilling or unable to stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense, flaw, or mistake. When we choose not to forgive, we have to keep our energy focused towards our anger or resentment. What ends up happening is that though we think we are hurting the other person, we are actually hurting ourselves. We are the ones that have to carry around the tension of the negative things we feel toward that person, and it can have terrible effects on us emotionally and physically. We can end up sad, depressed, bitter, or with sicknesses that result from stress. Wants us to forgive others so that we can live in the freedom that he has designed for us! Read Colossians 3:12-14.

