



MARCH  
**W-2**  
 2 0 1 7

**GRADES**  
**K-5**

**PRELUDE**

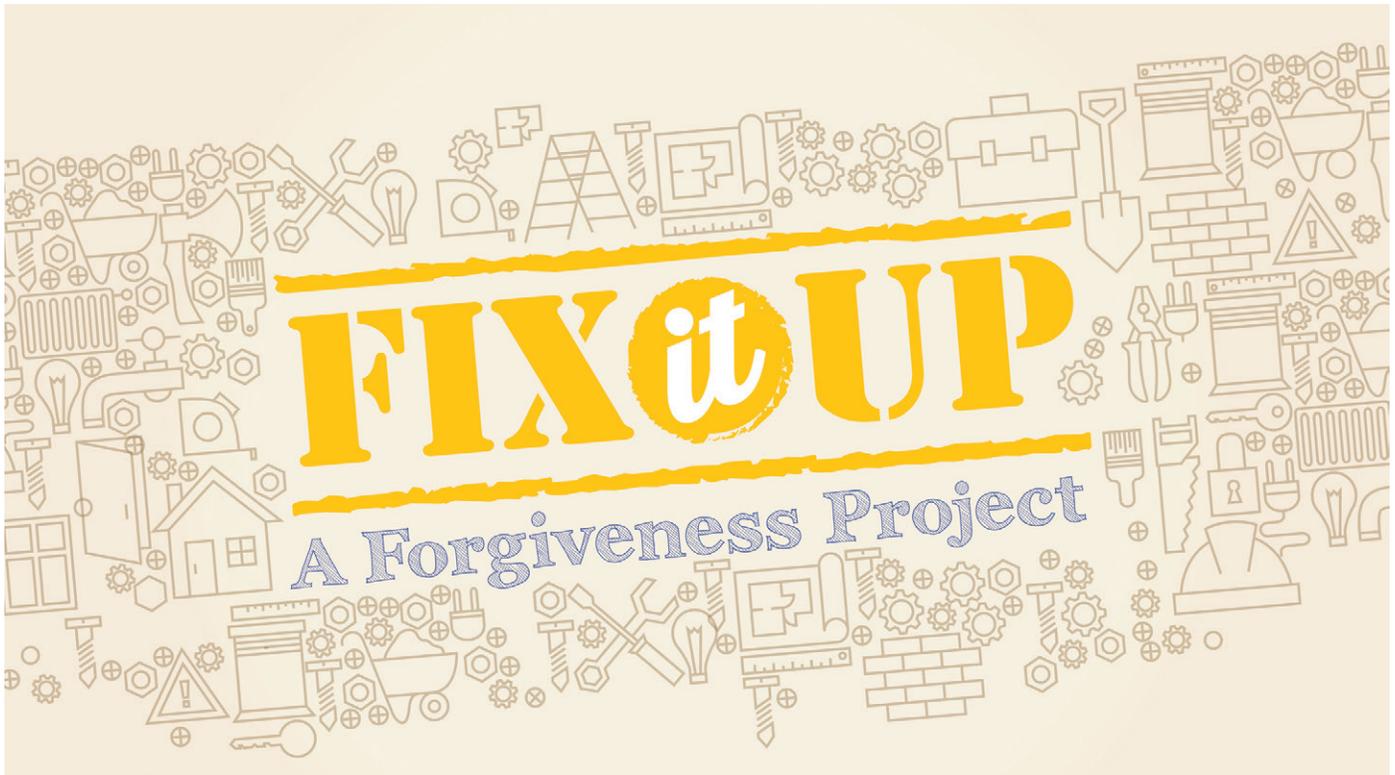
**SOCIAL**  
 15 MINUTES

**STORY**  
 25 MINUTES

**WORSHIP**  
 10 MINUTES

**GROUPS**  
 25 MINUTES

**HOME**



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**ABOUT GOD**

God is the one and only true God, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, so everything belongs to Him and is under His control. God is holy, so He is righteous, majestic, and loving. God is all knowing and purposeful, so He's at work to bring about His will. No person, thing, or idea compares to God.

**ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES**

God reveals Himself to us through the Bible, and it is 100% accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

**ABOUT PEOPLE**

People are made in God's image and for His pleasure. But everybody falls short of God's intention, or ideal, for people. In other words, everyone has sinned. As a result, we are all separated from Him, even though He wants an intimate relationship with each of us.

**ABOUT SALVATION**

That's why Jesus—God's Son—came and lived on this earth, died, and rose again. God offers His free gift of salvation to all who believe in Jesus and accept Him as Savior—the only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God. Anyone who accepts this gift is adopted as a son or daughter into God's family and will live with Him forever in heaven.

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### BIBLE STORY

**Dude, Where's My Son?**  
Lost Son  
Luke 15:11-24

### BOTTOM LINE

**Everyone needs to be forgiven,  
even me.**

### MEMORY VERSE

"Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you."  
**Colossians 3:13, NIV**

### LIFE APP

**Forgiveness—deciding that  
someone who has wronged you  
doesn't have to pay.**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I can trust God no matter what.**

**15**  
MINUTES

**SOCIAL:** Providing time for fun interaction  
Ideas for Early Arrivers  
Welcome Home

**25**  
MINUTES

**STORY:** Communicating God's truth in engaging ways  
Opener  
Worship  
Bible Story  
Prayer  
Closer

**10**  
MINUTES

**WORSHIP:** Inviting people to respond to God

**25**  
MINUTES

**GROUPS:** Creating a safe place to connect  
Home Plate  
Everybody!  
Pig in A Poke  
Prayer



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### SETTING UP THE STORY

**LEADER:** "Great singing, everyone! You can have a seat. Today's story is amazing. I have a feeling that you might have heard it before, So, I'd love your help to tell it. I need a few of you to come up and play the characters in the story. You won't have any lines, you'll just act out what I'm telling you to do. At a certain points throughout the story, I'll ask you (*to the audience*) what happened next, and everyone will tell the actors what they should do next.

*Bring up three kids (or 2 kids and 1 adult volunteer to play the father, the older the kids, the better.) Give them each a nametag. Direct the kid playing the father to one side of the stage, while the brothers stand in the middle. Place the prop box next to the father.*

"When Jesus was on earth, He lived like one of us. He slept and ate and worked and made friends and traveled. And has He taught His followers and performed miracles, Jesus showed us who God is. This story He was about to tell was no different.

"Jesus taught in parables. These were stories that He made up to make it easier for people understand something amazing about God. Some of Jesus' parables cast God as a shepherd. Or a king. Or as someone searching for a lost coin. And in one of those stories, he likened God to a father. If Jesus told the story today, it might sound something like this . . .

### SON LEAVES

**LEADER:** (*To the actors*) "Remember, you guys need to act out the story as I'm telling it. (*Back to the audience*) There once was a wealthy farmer who had two sons. We'll call them Peyton and Eli. Peyton never failed to do exactly what his father asked.



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"He mucked out the cow stalls, fertilized the cow patch, braided the horses tails and gave orders about the wheat harvest—all before breakfast! Then he went to join his father in the field to work for the day.

*Guide Peyton over to the father. Give them both a clipboard from the prop box.*

"Eli, on the other hand, was less enthusiastic. Frankly, Eli was a lot less interested in his family and the farm than he was in having a good time. And he knew that when his father died, he would inherit a huge chunk of his dad's money and property. He knew he could throw some serious parties with that kind of cash!

"The more Eli thought about that money, the more it consumed him. At last, he went to his father and . . .

*Guide Eli over to Peyton and the father if needed.*

"What do you guys think happened next? Do you think he helped his father and brother work in the field, do you think he brought them some food and water, or do you think he demanded his inheritance?

*Pause to let the kids respond. Adjust your response as necessary if they don't guess correctly.*

"That's right! Eli was there to ask his father to give him his share of his father's property and money. Eli's words were cruel. It was like saying he wished his dad were already dead! But Eli's father loved him, so the father divided up everything he owned and gave Eli his share of the money.

*Prompt the dad to give Eli the bag from the prop box. Quietly dismiss Peyton back to his seat.*

"Eli lost no time in packing up and heading out of town. He soon arrived in a foreign city full of colorful markets and even more colorful characters.

*Help Eli put on the party gear from the bag.*

"Within days, Eli had rented a home and bought an entire new wardrobe. He celebrated with parties every night. Pizza party Sunday! Paintball Monday! And don't forget Taco Tuesday!

"Eli made dozens of new friends. As long as he kept throwing parties, they happily showed up every day. But then a terrible famine swept over the land. Everyone ran low on money and food. Including Eli. And suddenly, Eli wasn't so popular.

*Take off Eli's party gear.*

### SON BOTTOMS OUT

**LEADER:** "Just like that, Eli found himself out of money and all alone—not to mention that his stomach was empty. He realized he would have to do something he'd dreaded all his life. *(To the audience)* What do you think that was? Do you think he had to join the circus, get a real job, or go to the bank for a loan?"



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*Pause to let the kids respond. Adjust your response as necessary if they don't guess correctly.*

"Yes, the day had come that Eli had been dreading. He had to get a real job. Unfortunately, finding work was a difficult as finding food, but at last Eli found a job taking care of pigs.

*Hand Eli the bucket and show him how to pretend tossing the pigs their food.*

"He could hardly afford food, so he was always hungry. In fact, the scraps he fed the pigs started looking pretty good. Yum, potato peel and moldy bread hash. No, don't do it, Eli!

"Eli's days out in the field with the pigs gave him plenty of time to think. And at last his thoughts turned to the home he'd tried so hard to leave behind. Even his father's servants ate like a king and here he was practically dying of hunger!

"Carefully, Eli began to make plans. He figured his father would be so angry he might fly into a rage or send him away. He figured he would have to talk fast to apologize to his father before he sent him away.

"Eli had sold his horse long ago, so he trudged back home on foot.

*Prompt Eli to leave the bucket behind and walk slowly back toward his father.*

"The journey took many long days and gave Eli a lot of time to think about what he would say to his father.

"As Eli neared his home, he took the back roads so no one would see him. He figured his father was probably out in the field.

### FATHER FORGIVES

**LEADER:** "But as Eli approached the house from a distance, he could just see a figure standing on the porch. It was his father.

"Eli froze, unable to believe what he was seeing. What do you think he saw? Was his father running toward him, yelling at him, or going back in the house and slamming the door?

*Pause to let the kids respond. Adjust your response as necessary if they don't guess correctly.*

"Yes, as soon as his father saw him, he rushed down the steps and ran into the road toward his son.

*Prompt the father to rush to the son if necessary.*

'My son!' his father shouted with joy, throwing his arms around Eli, hugging and kissing him. Eli stepped back, struggling to catch his breath.



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"'Father, I've sinned against heaven,' he quickly expressed. 'And against you, too. I'm not fit to be called your son anymore,' he continued his apology.

"To Eli's amazement, his father ignored these words, ushering his son back to the house. Many of the household servants had come out to see the commotion. His father called out to the servants, telling the to bring the best robe and put it on Eli. And to put a ring on Eli's finger and sandals on his feet.

*Get these items out of the prop box and put them on Eli.*

"Eli stood speechless as servants buzzed around him. But his father wasn't done. He called out for the servants to bring the fattest calf and kill it. 'Let's have a feast and celebrate!' he exclaimed!

"Eli started to protest. After all, he was the one who should be doing the work of the servants now. But Eli's father shook his head and listen to what he said. *(Open your Bible and read Luke 15:24)* 'This son of mine was dead. And now he is alive again. He was lost. And now he is found.'

"Wow—what a great father! And what a great story Jesus told. *(To the volunteers)* Thank you so much for your help. You can have a seat.

### WRAPPING UP THE STORY

**LEADER:** "Eli had expected to have to work to make things right. But instead, he found himself the honored guest of a big party all because his father had chosen not to make Eli pay for the wrong he had done.

"Eli needed to be forgiven, but he's not the only one. Every single one of us has messed up. We've all done things we regret, hurt people we love, and made choices that were not wise. Which is why . . .

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

**[Bottom Line]** "Everyone needs to be forgiven, even me.

"That's right. Thankfully, when we ask God for forgiveness, He will forgive us every time. How about we thank God right now for forgiveness. Let's pray.

### PRAY

**LEADER:** "Dear God, we confess that we've all messed up. We've all sinned; making wrong choices and hurting the people we love. Thank You for always forgiving us. Help us to seek You and Your help to make the wise choice every day. And help us to be brave to ask others to forgive us when we mess up. We love You. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen."