

Forgive and show mercy

Purpose

For students to learn God treats people with mercy and forgiveness and wants them to follow God's example by letting go of anger and showing compassion to others.

Students will reflect this by:

- identifying situations in which people get angry and don't want to forgive
- showing understanding of the account of Jonah's anger towards the people of Nineveh and to God
- showing understanding that people have a choice about their response to situations and can let go of anger and show compassion.

Preparation

- Read the book of Jonah, particularly 3:10–4:11 (Jonah's response when God forgives the Ninevites); Ephesians 4:25–32 (behaviour, especially anger); Proverbs 31:8–9 (speak up for people).
- Decide which options offered in the lesson plan will work best for your class.
- Choose from options and activities and photocopy worksheets as required.
 - BLM 18 *Anger cycle* (enlarge if using this option)
 - Web site BLM *Pin Jonah in the fish*
- Prepare 'Pin Jonah in the fish' game if choosing this option. You will need an outline of a large fish on A3 paper, a paper figure of Jonah cut out, sticky tape and blindfolds.
- Prepare a poster for the chain-breaker challenge if required.
- Contact the class teacher to arrange permission to leave a poster or banner in the classroom to remind students to take the chain breaker challenge during the coming week.
- Practise the Orientation dominos demonstration if necessary.

Biblical Reflection

- God forgives us all if we repent, and wants us to forgive others.
- While there are situations when it is okay to be angry (*for example, injustice*), we must not sin in our anger (*that is, revenge*).
- Be kind and merciful and forgive others, just as God forgave us through Jesus Christ.
- When injustice in the world makes us angry, one way to be kind is to speak up for the victims, particularly those without power or hope.

Key Verse

Be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Jesus Christ.
(Ephesians 4:32)

Values

- Inclusion and Trust
- Respect
- Forgiveness
- Integrity
- Care and Compassion
- Righteousness

Take to Class

- *The Bible for Today (CEV)*
- Student Workbooks
- photocopied worksheets as required
- tape or other adhesive for pinning up a poster
- dominos as required
- poster of fish, Jonah figure, blindfolds, sticky tape, if required
- poster or banner for the chain-breaker challenge if required
- DVD *Rag-pickers of Delhi* if required

Orientation

Choose one of the following options for an orientation activity.

- Play a game of 'Pin Jonah in the fish'.
 - Hang up the poster of the fish. Give out the cut out Jonah figures. Have the students take turns in pinning the figure onto the fish, some wearing a blindfold, some not.
 - Use the game to talk about anger, justice and fairness.
- Play a game of 'Anger dominos'.
 - Create two lines of dominos by standing them on their ends so that when one falls, it will knock down the next and so on.
 - Use the enlarged copy of BLM 18 and pin it up.
 - Explain the anger cycle. Responding out of anger can hurt another person, leading them to respond out of anger, which in turn may hurt another person, and so on.
 - Talk about what makes the students angry. Discuss options for responding that would continue the chain reaction and options for stopping the cycle.
 - Demonstrate by pushing down the first domino of the first line, making all the others fall down.
 - Talk about what would happen if someone decided to break the chain reaction by forgiving and responding with compassion and mercy instead of anger.
 - Now remove a domino half way along the second domino line so that when you push the first domino, they stop falling down where the removed domino stood.
 - Discuss how this illustrates breaking the chain reaction of anger.

Guided Discovery

- Ask students what they remember about Jonah from last week.
- Reread the final section of the Jonah narrative either from BLM 17 from last lesson or from the Bible, Jonah 3:10–4:11.
- Focus on the last section of the story, where God forgives the Ninevites and shows them mercy and kindness. Highlight Jonah's choice to respond to the whole situation with anger.

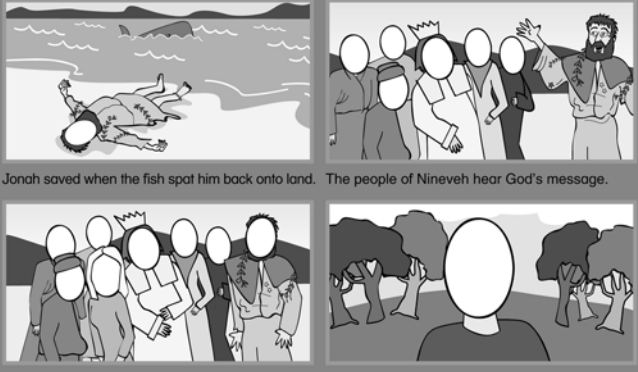
Unit 3 Session 2 Be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:32)

Forgive and show mercy



How did they feel? 1

How do you think they felt? Draw in the facial expressions of the people in the Jonah story.



Jonah saved when the fish spat him back onto land. The people of Nineveh hear God's message. God forgives the people of Nineveh. God loves and forgives you too.

Choose to be angry or choose to forgive? 2

Choose your pathway through the maze to see what happens when you choose anger or to follow God's way of forgiving others and being kind and merciful. If you have time, you could do it a second time with a different coloured pencil or pen and see what happens if you make different choices.



Start: You get into trouble for something you didn't do.

You tell the teacher you are innocent but you are not believed.

You decide to forgive the kid who did it and your teacher and forget about the whole thing.

You set up the kid who really did it to get into trouble.

You say you are sorry to the kid you dopped on but you are ignored.

You find out who did it and tell the teacher.

Finish: The other kid comes and apologises to you on your way home for getting you in trouble.

Finish: The other kid makes trouble for you on your way home from school.

20

- Discuss whether Jonah had a right to be angry. Who was Jonah concerned about? Who was God concerned about?
- Have the students complete the 'How did they feel' activity in the Student Workbook to further explore the story and how people in the story felt. 1
- Draw out the idea that sometimes anger is the right response, for example, when it's motivated by concern for others. However, sometimes anger is the wrong response, such as when it's motivated by selfishness. Regardless of the reason for their anger, people should not hurt others because they are angry. We can choose to follow God's example. God forgives us and shows us kindness even when we have done the wrong thing.
- Discuss the sorts of situations in the world where it could be right to be angry.
- A positive way of dealing with anger at the injustices is described by Mother Teresa. She once said, 'If you can't

find out about people in poor countries and pray for them
organise a fundraising activity to help poor people in your local area
help someone else with their homework if they are struggling
share your things

Turn your negative anger into positive action

Sometimes we get angry when we see people being treated unfairly. Write down some things you could do to help some of these people at school, in your town or city, in your country or in other parts of the world.

3

look up and learn more about how you can help make a difference to justice in the world for kids
offer to volunteer or support an aid organisation or a charity
speak up for someone who is being bullied at school

make friends with someone lonely
invite someone new or without many friends to play with you

Angry or kind? 4

Create a crossword with no clues, like this one:

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P
R O S E
E
R   B E A U T I F U L
D   T
Y


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Join 'angry' words in a crossword pattern. Start with **greedy**: anger, greedy, nasty, rude

An extra activity 5

Do the same with these 'kind' words. Start with **helpful**: forgive, kind, care, share

Make a bookmark using these words:
Feeling mad?
Forgive!
Be kind!



Seven-day chain-breaker challenge 6

For the next week choose to break the chain of anger and revenge. Instead of getting angry, try to forgive and be kind when people make you mad!

21

- 'An extra activity' in the Student Workbook reminds the students to respond with forgiveness to situations that make them angry. 5
- Students who finish all the other activities can write a letter to Jonah telling him why they think he made some wrong choices and why he should have been happy when God didn't destroy the people of Nineveh.

Student Reflection

- Have several students tell the class one thing they have learned today. Add any major points that are not mentioned. (*Points to cover: Jonah's anger; letting go of anger and showing forgiveness and compassion, breaking the anger chain; people ought to be angry about some things, such as unfairness to other people; we can all do something, however small, to help overcome injustice.*)
- Encourage students to take the 'Seven day chain breaker challenge' in the Student Workbook. Tell them that they will have to choose whether to add to the chain reaction by getting angry and hurting others too, or choose instead to respond with forgiveness and kindness. 6
 - If you made a banner or poster about the anger chain, try to arrange with the class teacher to leave it up in the classroom.
- You might like to use this prayer with the class.

Dear God, sometimes things make us really angry and we want revenge. Thank you that you don't treat us that way. Please help us to choose your way of responding when things happen that make us angry. Amen.

feed a hundred people, then just feed one'. Emphasise to the students that, although the whole of the world's injustices can be overwhelming, even doing something small will help make a difference. Discuss what this means: We can all do a little bit and it does help.

Student Exploration

- Students can explore further the consequences of choosing anger or forgiveness by completing the maze 'Choose to be angry or choose to forgive?' in the Student Workbook. 2
- Students can complete the 'Turn your negative anger into positive action' activity in the Student Workbook to explore some practical ways we can help people in need. 3
- The 'Angry or kind?' create-a-crossword activity allows students to further consider their actions in terms of anger or kindness. 4

Anger cycle

