

Open Arms

By Nance Keyes

for use as
STEP 1**Lesson 7****Focus:**

God welcomes us with open arms.

Lesson 7**Bible Basis:**

Luke 15:11-24

Lesson 7**Memory Verse:**

“The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion.”
—Numbers 14:18

Students will think about how we react when others hurt us and will celebrate the way God forgives with open arms even when we let Him down.

Materials:

Internet access

➤ **How do you feel when someone takes something from you that is very important or special?** (Answers may vary: angry, want to get back at a person, want revenge, etc.)

In September 2018, a 26-year-old man was shot in his apartment by an off-duty female police officer. A year later, she was found guilty of murder. After the sentencing, the victim’s younger brother spoke to the former officer in the courtroom. Let’s see what he had to say to her.

Play the following video [3:06. You could stop after 1:57]:

Title: Botham Jean’s brother hugs ex-officer Amber Guyger after sentencing

Source: YouTube.com

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc7J37N4Gws>

Short Description: A story of love and forgiveness.

Brandt Jean could have talked about how Amber Guyger took his brother from his family. He could have told her that he hoped she rotted in jail for her actions. Instead he talked about wanting the best for her. He loved her as a person, and he wanted her to give her life for Christ.

- **How was the brother’s reaction a surprise?** (Answers may vary).
- **What type of a reaction would you have expected?** (Answers may vary; hate, dislike, disgust, wanted her to pay, wanted something bad to happen to her, etc.)
- **When have you had those kinds of reactions toward someone who hurt or angered you?** (Answers may vary.)
- **Have you ever wondered if someone else, or even God, has had similar thoughts or**

feelings about something you did or said? (Answers may vary.)

Brandt Jean gave forgiveness to Amber Guyger with open arms. Today we are going to talk about the way God treats a person, no matter what he or she has done.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

upper elementary



Lesson 7 / July 19, 2020

Open Arms

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 7

Focus:

God welcomes us with open arms.

Lesson 7

Bible Basis:

Luke 15:11-24

Lesson 7

Memory Verse:

“The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion.”
—Numbers 14:18

Materials:

- Internet access
- Bibles
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Scissors

Create a sample of the reminder before the lesson. You could send hand patterns to students ahead of time.

It is clear that the love of God is what helped Brandt Jean open his arms to Amber Guyger.

We are going to make hands of love to remind us that God’s arms are open to us and we can keep our arms of love open to others, too.

Guide your preteens through the following steps:

- Using paper and pens or pencils, trace both hands (separately) and cut them out.
- Place the paper hands side by side on the table with the thumbs on the inside. These are the *backs* of the hands.
 - Write the memory verse on the back of one hand: “The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion.” —Numbers 14:18
 - Turn the hands over, so the thumbs are on the outside. These are the *palms* of the hands.
 - On each finger of one hand write one action, thought, or attitude that you think may interfere with your being forgiven by God.
 - Draw a line (strike through) what you wrote on each finger.
 - In the middle of the hand (on the palm) write “God welcomes me with open arms.”
 - On each finger of the other hand write one thing that you tend to hold against other people.
 - Draw a line (strike through) what you wrote on each finger.
 - In the middle of the hand (on the palm) write “With God’s help, I will welcome others with open arms.”

Place the hands face down (verse side up) on your dresser, desk, or night stand. Read the verse before going to bed each night and again when you get up in the morning. During the week, if you struggle with anger from being offended by someone, or if you are on the other side of anger by offending someone else, or if you feel that you messed up and offended God, turn the hands over. Look at what you crossed out on the fingers. Read the focus you wrote on the palm of the hands. Then, hold your own hands out to God, and ask Him to help you forgive others with open arms, or ask God for forgiveness and for help to accept His open arms of love.

Close in prayer thanking God for His open arms of love and forgiveness. Ask for help in having open arms for others.

Take time during the week to text students encouraging them to open their arms in forgiveness to others.

(We are not affiliated with and do not endorse any website or any other media listed on these pages. At the time of writing, we carefully review the referenced material and non-referenced web page content. However, due to the nature of the Internet, non-cited content on the website [including pop-ups, links, and ads] changes frequently and is beyond our control. Please review carefully before showing links in the classroom.)