

# Headed toward Forgiveness

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as  
**STEP 1** 

**Lesson 3****Focus:**

God's there for you  
with forgiveness.

**Lesson 3****Bible Basis:**

Isaiah 55:1-7;  
Hosea 14:1-4

**Lesson 3****Memory Verse:**

The LORD is compassionate and  
gracious, slow to anger, abounding  
in love.  
—Psalm 103:8

**Students will put themselves in the shoes of the forgiver and forgiven as they explore the forgiveness God has for them.**

**Materials:**

- Internet access

**The following story was recently released .**

Play this video for your students [6:35; stop playing at 3:35].

Forgiveness After The Ultimate Tragedy Turns Strangers Into Brothers | TODAY

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DMw2\\_ClwNw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DMw2_ClwNw)

➤ **Imagine you're Erik seeing Matt for the first time after his falling asleep at the wheel fatally wounding your wife and unborn child. How would you feel?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Most of us would be angry, resentful, and desire revenge. We might experience the trauma all over again. We might also be irritated we now have to work with this person who cared so little for us and took so much from us that we ended up here in the first place.)

➤ **Imagine you're Matt in this moment. How do you feel?** (Accept all reasonable answers. We might be fearful of Erik's anger, or ashamed of our past behavior, or humbled by the way the two were brought back together.)

➤ **What were the motivations to *not* forgive? What were the motivations to forgive?** (Accept all reasonable answers. On the one hand, can you offer forgiveness and still grieve for the people you lost? On the other hand, faith, empathy, and desire to follow Jesus' plan for forgiveness motivated Erik to forgive.)

**You may find this story inspiring or upsetting. A remarkable story of forgiveness, it's still unfair that Erik lost his wife and unborn baby in the tragic accident. It would've been easy not to forgive Matt, but God was at work.**

**This specific story may not provide the blueprint for how to forgive someone who's wronged you, but it does offer an illustration of God's compassion and graciousness to all. Though people live selfishly and do nothing to deserve God's kindness, God forgives and extends His goodness anyway.**

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

# Headed toward Forgiveness

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

### Lesson 3

#### Focus:

God's there for you  
with forgiveness.

### Lesson 3

#### Bible Basis:

Isaiah 55:1-7;  
Hosea 14:1-4

### Lesson 3

#### Memory Verse:

The LORD is compassionate and  
gracious, slow to anger, abounding  
in love.  
—Psalm 103:8

#### Materials:

- None

**God's grace and compassion can be hard to comprehend, not only because it is hard to extend this kindness to others, but also because it can be difficult to receive this kindness for ourselves.**

- **Do you ever have a hard time showing grace to yourself? Tell about that.** (Accept all reasonable answers. Some teens will struggle with this more than others. Some may describe themselves as perfectionists. Others may lie awake at night replaying their mistakes in their mind. Others may deprive or punish themselves for things they think they've done wrong.)
- **What sorts of negative labels do you give yourself or hear from others?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Labels may relate to looks, ability, smarts, status, mistakes, or circumstances. It may help for you to share some of your own here—especially ones you heard at their age.)
- **How would it change your life to label yourself as forgiven instead?** (Accept all reasonable answers. It might mean having more grace to give oneself another chance after a mistake. It might mean freedom to talk or pray about issues rather than hide them. It might mean a greater capacity to extend compassion to others.)

**God is always there for you with forgiveness. This week, remind yourself of this by repeating our memory verse every day. Pick a time or times throughout the day to say or read the verse—first thing when you wake up or before you fall asleep, or at times when you feel tested or burdened in some way.** Encourage your teens to write it somewhere that they will see several times a day—on a mirror, in a locker, or set it on their phone's home screen along with a frequent alarm reminder to re-read/memorize. **Evaluate whether this changes your actions or attitudes. Look for opportunities to share this message or a measure of grace with others.**

Close in prayer.

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