**February 7th, 2021: Pre-K thru 2nd Sunday School Lesson
ATTRIBUTES OF GOD lesson 7: God is merciful**

 **ACTIVITY: GOD’S STICKY MERCY (Materials: posterboard, black marker, sticky notes)**

**PREPARATION:** Draw a body outline on the poster board (similar to that of a gingerbread man) and set it on the floor.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Ask the kids to sit with you in a circle around the poster with sticky notes handy. Explain that God is merciful and gives us second chances when we do bad things because He loves us. Instruct the class to pick up a sticky note every time you read a prompt and place the note somewhere on the poster to show that God’s mercy “covers” our sin.

Say, “God’s mercy covers me when…”
1. I don’t share. 2. My words are mean or hateful. 3. I get angry. 4. I hit someone.
5. I disobey my parents. 6. I take a friend’s toy. 7. I’m impatient. 8. I tease a friend.

Tell the children that we shouldn’t keep doing bad things just because God is merciful. Explain that we should be thankful for His mercy because it protects us from the forever punishment of our sin (being separated from God when we die). Point out that the entire body on the poster is covered in sticky notes, just like our bodies are covered by God’s mercy. Also, emphasize that God’s mercy allows us to have a change of heart. When we repent or turn away from sin, we can join Jesus and follow Him.

**WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE VERSE**

**"You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy." Micah 7:18b NIV**
Prepare ahead of time by writing “MERCY” on 10-20 index cards and hiding them throughout the classroom. Then read the verse out loud with the children and explain that God gives us second chances when we do bad things because He loves us. Allow the class to search for the “MERCY” cards. Once all the cards have been found, if time allows, talk about the letters in the word “MERCY” and ask the children to say them in order with you. Lastly, read the verse one last time to the class.

**BIBLE STORY**

**Introduction:** Micah was one of God’s messengers, or prophets, who warned the Hebrew people that God was going to punish them for their disobedience. However, God also said that all of His promises would come true, including the promise of a Savior, Jesus Christ. God’s great mercy gave the Hebrew people another chance to obey and serve Him.

**Read Micah 7:18 (God gives great forgiveness and mercy)**
Tell the class that you have an important message and read the verse out loud by cupping your hands around your mouth. Then ask the children to say, “God is happy to give us mercy” by cupping their hands around their mouths to practice sharing the message. Tell the children that we should also be happy to give others a second chance to do the right thing.

**Discussion Questions:**
1. Does God stay angry forever?*(No.)*
2. How does God feel when He gives mercy? *(Happy or delightful.)*
3. How should we feel to give mercy? *(Happy or delightful.)*

**Read Ephesians 2:4-5 (Jesus is God’s greatest display of mercy)**
Help the class understand that God gives us second chances, or mercy, because He loves us. Also, the most merciful thing He’s ever done is give us Jesus.

**Discussion Questions:**
1. Why does God give us mercy?*(Because He loves us.)*
2. Who is Jesus and why do we need Him? *(He is our Savior who died to pay for our sins.)*
3. How do we accept Jesus, God’s greatest gift of mercy? *(By asking God for forgiveness, believing in Jesus as God’s son, and asking Him to save us from our sins.)*
4. What message about Jesus should we share with others?*(That He died for our sins and can save us.)*

**Conclusion:** We know God is very merciful with us because He gives us 2nd chances and sent His son to die for our sins. We can follow God’s example by giving others 2nd chances. Don’t forget to tell others that God is merciful and Jesus died for our sins.

**CRAFT: GOD IS RICH IN MERCY (Materials: activity page printed, construction paper, glitter paint, sponge brush, jewel stickers, baby wipes, markers)
PREPARATION:** Before class print out an activity page for each child in class.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Apply glitter paint to each child’s hands and have students place their painted hands on the paper to create hand prints. Tell each child that God is rich in mercy to us, so we should also give second chances to people who hurt our feelings. Explain that God is merciful, and encourage the class to discuss their artwork with others as it relates to God’s mercy.

**ACTIVITY: THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT**

**PREPARATION:** Explain to the children that they will be acting out a story about a servant who was not merciful. Help them spread out across the room so they will have plenty of space to participate.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Perform each prompt’s action while telling the story and ask the children to copy you:
1. *(Sitting on your knees while holding your hands up in the air as if begging for mercy.)*There once was a servant who owed the king a lot of money and he couldn’t repay it. He begged the king for mercy.

2. *(Proudly walk with your head held high.)*The king told the servant that he was going to sell his entire family as slaves to pay the debt. But then the king decided to give him a second chance; he forgave the servant instead of punishing him.

3. *(Pointing and shaking your finger with a mean face.)*After the king had shown the servant mercy, the servant called upon his friend who owed him money. The servant demanded that his friend repay him, but his friend couldn’t. The servant was furious and had his friend arrested. Even though the servant had been in a similar situation where he had been shown mercy, he did not give his friend a second chance.

4. *(Crossing your arms with a stern face.)*The king heard that the servant had been unmerciful with his friend even though the servant had been given a second chance. The king was angry and threw the servant into jail.

5. (*Walking with a drooping head and shoulders.*) The servant was unkind and unmerciful even though he had been given a 2nd chance.

6. *(Standing with open arms and a smiling face.)*God tells us in the Bible, Matthew 18, that we should give mercy to others because He is happy when He gives mercy to us.

**PRAYER/SNACK:** Start by praying to God and thanking Him for the mercy He gives us every day. Then serve the children crackers and small cups of water or juice. During the snack, talk about biblical examples of God’s mercy, such as Jonah and the whale. Discuss God's mercy and how He wants everyone to know Him.

**CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Remind the children that everyone can receive mercy and second chances from God.
Say, “Raise your hand if…”
1. God gives you second chances (mercy).
2. Your parents give you second chances (mercy).
3. You can give second chances (mercy) to others.

Encourage the children by admitting that mercy is hard because we sin and do bad things. However, God gives us mercy and second chances, so we can also be patient and give second chances to others to show God’s love.

**What We Learned:** Today children learned that God is extremely merciful with us and gives us second chances when we sin. God showed the most mercy to us when He sent Jesus to die for our sins so we can go to Heaven and be with Him when we die. We should follow God’s example and give mercy to others because He gives us second chances every day. (Scriptures used: Micah 7:18, Ephesians 2:4-5)

**Words to Remember:** (Bible versions used are selected to help young children learn and understand the meaning of scripture.) "You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy." Micah 7:18b NIV Write the word “MERCY” on 5-10 index cards and hide them throughout a room. Allow your child to find the cards and then discuss with him or her what the word “MERCY” means (getting a second chance when we do something bad) and how the word is spelled. Read the Bible verse and talk about how God feels happiness or delight when He shows us mercy. We should be like God’s image and happily give others a second chance. Discuss several ways your child could give a friend or sibling a second chance. Practice this exercise several times this week to help your child remember the verse and reinforce what he or she learned about God during class.

**Suggested Parent/Child Activity:** Read the parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:23-35 (or use a children’s Bible to tell the story). Emphasize the mercy of the king, the ungratefulness of the servant, and the servant’s punishment for not being merciful. Read the story again while acting out the events with your child. Then review the main idea that we should give mercy to others because God has given us many second chances.

**Daily Prayer:** God, thank You for giving us second chances through Your great mercy. Help us give second chances to others because You always give us second chances. We want to show Your love by giving mercy to others. Amen.