

The Prodigal Son: Lesson 1

SuperTruth: Our heavenly Father is always ready to forgive.

SuperVerse: O LORD, You are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for Your help. Psalm 86:5 (NLT)

Bible Story: Luke 15:1–7,11–32

Game Materials Needed:

- Two bags with handles: grocery bags or totes are ideal
- Two medium-size boxes or plastic containers
- Small items such as coins, pebbles, or dried beans—five per child, plus extras, to also be used in the Teaching section
- Optional: painters tape or masking tape
- Optional: poster board or whiteboard and marker, or chalkboard and chalk
- Bible or the Superbook Bible App

Teaching Materials Needed:

- Welcome mat: use an actual mat if possible, or copy the Welcome Mat Pattern
- Lost and Found Challenge Booklet Pattern
- Lost and Found Challenge Scripture Pattern
- Pillowcase or bag
- Small items, such as coins, pebbles, or dried beans used for The Journey
- Bible or the Superbook Bible App

SuperVerse Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard and markers or chalkboard and chalk
- Eraser
- Bible or the Superbook Bible App

Prayer Materials Needed:

- Bible or the Superbook Bible App

LARGE GROUP / GRADES 1–6

Our new Superbook adventure called “The Prodigal Son.” It is a parable, or short story, that Jesus told to help people understand something very important about God.

- Chris, Joy and Gizmo don’t know how to help a friend who is running away because he thinks his dad will never forgive him.
- Superbook takes Chris, Joy and Gizmo to ancient Galilee. Jesus tells the story of the Prodigal Son—a young man who leaves home for what he thinks is the adventure of a lifetime, only to discover that what he wants most in the world is his father’s love. The children learn about God’s unfailing love and the power of forgiveness.

SMALL GROUP / GRADES 1–6

Game: The Journey (15 minutes)

Objective: Play a game about the prodigal son’s journey.

- In this game, you will each have a turn to play the Prodigal Son. You will take your inheritance, waste it all on fun and games, feel sorry for what you’ve done, and go home with nothing. However, you will arrive home to much more—forgiveness and a celebration. Let’s get started!!

Game Instructions:

- Give a bag to the first player on each team and start the game. The two players each take five items from the “Inheritance” box and place them in their bags for the journey. They walk quickly to the “throw line,” take the items from their bags and throw the pieces one at a time into the “Fun and Games” box. Children celebrate the return of each player when they return “home.”

Teaching: Welcome Home (15 minutes)

Objective: Discuss a father’s forgiveness.

- The beautiful message of Jesus’ parable today is that God’s love is unfailing, and He is always ready to forgive us.

Take Home Activity—Discipleship Challenge (5 minutes)

- Look up the first “Lost and Found Challenge” scripture at home, then fill in the answers to the four questions.

SuperVerse: Superbook Correct (5 minutes)

Objective: Memorize the SuperVerse with a group activity.

- We are His children and He is loving, kind, and ready to forgive. When we come to Him humbly and confess our sins, God wants to wrap His arms around us, forgive us, and make us feel secure in His love and acceptance. This is the kind of heavenly Father we have!
- Children will look away from the board as you change words of the SuperVerse to alter its meaning. Children will look at the board again and raise their hands to tell you what is wrong with the SuperVerse. As they tell you the correct words, write them on the board to fix the verse.

Prayer: Forgiveness Prayers (5 minutes)

Objective: Communicate with God.

- Jesus wants us to see our heavenly Father like the father in the parable—not waiting to punish us or turn us away, but to lovingly forgive us when we sin and to welcome us back with open arms!
- Children will find a place in the room where they can pray alone. Ask the children to think of wrong things they have thought or done that they would like their heavenly Father to forgive.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES (REFER TO THE LESSON GUIDE FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS)

Balloon Game: Play a game about receiving forgiveness. | **Grades 1–6** | 10 min

SuperVerse Game: Assemble the SuperVerse in the proper order. | **Grades 1–6** | 15 min

Activity: Create storyboards and act out the Bible story. | **Grades 4–6** | 15 min

Coloring Activity: Color scenes from the Superbook video. | **Grades 1–3** | 15 min