

The I.O.U. - I Owe You

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors

Use this activity with family members to begin a conversation about forgiveness and debts.

To Begin:

- Print an I.O.U. (next page) for each family member.
- Each person completes the I.O.U. with an extravagant thing or dollar amount to owe another person. For example, I owe you \$1,000,000
- Collect the I.O.U.s and mix them up.
- Let everyone choose one and have them sign and date the I.O.U.

Collecting a Debt: Explain that if you owe someone something, that is called a debt.

Now the fun part. It's time to collect. Have everyone use their imaginations!

- Divide into pairs.
- Each person presents their I.O.U. to their partner. And have them say out loud what they owe. For example: "Ben, I.O.U. one million dollars."
- Have the partner react to the extravagance! For example: "Wow! One million dollars and I will be rich."

And now the forgiving.

- The partner says "I will have mercy on you because I know that it would be a great hardship for you to pay me <<insert what is owed>>. I will not make you pay it. I forgive your debt. "
- And the partner tears up the I.O.U.
- Make a pile in the middle of your space with all the torn debts.

When everyone has had a turn, ask:

- I wonder how you felt when you knew how much you owed the other person?
- I wonder how you felt when the person forgave your debt?

After everyone has had a turn (and maybe had some fun with this), replace the words "debts" and "debtors." *And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those **who sin against us.***

- I wonder how you feel knowing that God forgives you for your mistakes and bad choices and things you've left undone?
- I wonder why God wants us to be merciful to others and offer them forgiveness?

End with sharing a blessing with each other. Person #1 says to Person #2, "You are forgiven" and makes the sign of the cross on their hand or forehead. Person #2 responds "You are loved"; Person #2 turns to Person #3 and repeats the phrase and actions; until everyone has been blessed.

"Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had mercy on you?" Matthew 18:33

I. O. U

What you Owe: _____

Date: _____

Sign: _____

I. O. U

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Date: _____

Sign: _____

I. O. U

What you Owe: _____

Date: _____

Sign: _____