



A year of intentional choices to follow Jesus and share the Good News.

— CHOOSE THIS DAY —

*Choose this day whom you will serve... Joshua 24:15*



FIRST PRIORITY HOPE GUIDE

# CHOOSE FORGIVENESS

• ISSUE THREE •

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# INTRODUCTION

## How to get the most out of your First Priority H.O.P.E. Guide

HELP WEEK • OVERCOME WEEK • PREPARE WEEK • ENGAGE WEEK



### DEVO TIME

The HOPE Guide is designed to be used weekly. For example: on Monday, read through Help Week and put it into action the rest of the week. Then next Monday, read Overcome Week and do the same. So pick a day that works best for you, whether it is alone or with a group, and read that week's devotion.



### PRAYER STOP

Spending time in prayer with God and praying for others.



### H.E.A.R.

Listen to what God is telling you through His Word.

- Highlight Scripture
- Explain Context
- Apply to your life
- Respond



### GO

Your challenge for the week.



### SHARE

Telling your faith story to others.

### STUDENT CHECK-IN

Click on QR Code and share where you are.



This month we will learn how freeing it is to choose forgiveness and that we forgive others, because we have been forgiven. We are so glad you chose to join us. Have an amazing month!

Live Forgiven,

*First Priority Family*



# CHOOSE FORGIVENESS



My Prayer list for my school:



Listen to what God is telling you through His Word.

## HIGHLIGHT SCRIPTURE

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32

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## EXPLAIN

In a fallen world, forgiveness is essential to maintain close relationships. We all need forgiveness, and we all need to grant forgiveness. Why? Because we all sin, and we all have been sinned against. But asking for and granting forgiveness are not easy tasks! If you're a Christian, asking and granting forgiveness are not optional. Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6 verse 15, that if you do not forgive others, the heavenly Father will not forgive you: “but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” It is important for you as a Christian to understand and practice forgiveness.

The Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 31 how we are to put away all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander. In verse 32, it tells us how we are to replace these sins: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” What does it mean to ask forgiveness or to forgive someone? Paul says that we are to forgive each other “just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” God didn't say, “Hey, don't worry about it. We all make mistakes!” He didn't just brush our sin aside. He requires that the penalty be paid. But in love, He sent His own Son to bear the penalty that we deserved.

How do we put forgiveness into practice? To forgive someone is to promise not to bring the matter up again or use it against them. God forgives us, so that we may be reconciled to Him and enjoy a close

relationship with Him. When we forgive others, we should also seek to restore the broken relationship. This does not always mean becoming best of friends, but it should at least mean that we are friendly towards the person. To say, "I forgive you, but I never want to see your ugly face again," is not to forgive as God forgives! We are still commanded to love our enemies. In Luke chapter 6 verses 27 and 28 it tells us: "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

When you forgive, you will get rid of your bitterness, which eats at your soul. You will enjoy restored relationships with others, along with many other blessings. But the most important thing is that you will glorify God with your actions.

APPLY

Today's Help Tool is the Candy Cane Gospel. It is a great way to share how Jesus forgives. The instructions to help you explain the Candy Cane Gospel are on the next page.

### CANDY CANE GOSPEL

**SHEPHERD'S STAFF**  
JESUS IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
JOHN 10:14

**RED STRIPES**  
REPRESENT THE BLOOD THAT JESUS SHED ON THE CROSS TO FORGIVE US OF OUR SINS  
Romans 5:8

**WHITE CANDY**  
REPRESENTS THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN AND JESUS GIVING US A CLEAN HEART  
1 JOHN 1:9

**"J" FOR JESUS**  
YOU CAN BEGIN A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS TODAY BY CONFESSING YOUR SIN AND BELIEVING IN HIM  
Romans 10:9

- The shape of the candy cane reminds us of a "Shepherd's Staff". In John chapter 10 verse 14 it says, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,".
- The "Red Stripe" on the candy cane represents the blood that Jesus shed to forgive us of our sins. "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We need forgiveness because in Romans chapter 3 verse 23 we are reminded that we ALL have sinned. "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,".
- The "White Candy" represents the forgiveness of sins and clean heart. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. " 1 John 1:19
- When the candy cane is turned upside down it represents a "J" for Jesus! To begin a relationship with Him we must do what Romans chapter 10 verse 9 says, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

INSTRUCTIONS NEXT PAGE →



HELP WEEK

CHOOSE FORGIVENESS



## CHOOSE FORGIVENESS

### RESPOND

This will help you explain the Candy Cane Gospel. Practice so you can share this everytime you see a candy cane.

- The shape of the candy cane reminds us of a **Shepherd's Staff**. In John chapter 10 verse 14, it says, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me."
- The **Red Stripe** on the candy cane represents the blood that Jesus shed to forgive us of our sins. Romans chapter 5 verse 8 says, "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We need forgiveness, because in Romans chapter 3 verse 23, we are reminded that we ALL have sinned: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
- The **White Candy** represents the forgiveness of sins and a clean heart. First John chapter 1 verse 19 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- When the candy cane is turned upside down, it represents a "J" for Jesus! To begin a relationship with Him, we must do what Romans chapter 10 verse 9 says, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

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### BIG IDEA TO REMEMBER

Forgive each other just as Jesus forgave you.



Spend this week sharing the Good News of Jesus by using a Candy Cane.

## THE HOPE OF CHRIST IN EVERY STUDENT

# SIGN UP TODAY

## FIRST PRIORITY TEXT UPDATES



Text @\_\_\_\_\_ to 81010 to stay in the loop.  
[SCHOOL CODE]

### ODESSA

Bonham: @bonhamfp  
Bowie: @bowiefp  
Compass: @compassfp  
Crockett: @crockettfp  
Ector: @ectorfp  
New Tech: @ntofp  
Nimitz: @nimitzfp  
OCA: @utpbfp  
OCTechs: @octechsfp  
Odessa High: @odessa2fp  
Permian High: @permian2fp  
Stem Academy: @stemfp  
Wilson Young: @wayfp

### MIDLAND

Abell: @abellfp  
Alamo: @alamofp  
Goddard: @goddardfp  
Lee Fresh: @leefreshfp  
Lee High: @leefp  
Midland Fresh: @midfreshfp  
Midland High: @midlandfp  
San Jacinto: @sjfp

### ANDREWS

Andrews High: @andrewsfp  
Andrews Middle: @andrewsmfp

### GREENWOOD

Brooks Middle: @brooksfp  
Greenwood High: @greenfp

### KERMIT

Kermit Jr. High: @kermitjhf  
Kermit High: @kermitfp

### MONAHANS

Monahans High: @monahansfp  
Walker Jr. High: @walkerfp

### STANTON

Stanton Jr. High: @stantonjfp  
Stanton High: @stantonfp

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## OVERCOME WEEK

Overcoming things that keep you from sharing the Good News of Jesus.

### CHOOSE FORGIVENESS



My Prayer list for my family:

#### WOULD YOU RATHER:

- Would you rather be an unknown superhero or a famous villain?
- Would you rather have lots of energy or lots of money?
- Would you rather have a lifetime of free Netflix or an unlimited gift card to Starbucks?
- Would you rather be able to taste colors or see smells?
- Would you rather be forgiven or forgive someone?



Listen to what God is telling you through His Word.

#### HIGHLIGHT SCRIPTURE

“bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” **Colossians 3:13**

#### EXPLAIN

When we think about forgiveness, it brings certain pictures to our mind. Maybe it's something that makes you think of a time when you were forgiven, because you had done something wrong. Did you feel a sense of relief when it was over? Maybe you have forgiven someone that has wronged you. Maybe you were in the right, but you still wanted to forgive them. How did you feel about that? Forgiveness is a choice we make.

In Colossians chapter 3 verse 13 it says, “bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” We are to forgive. We are to work through difficulties in relationships and to forgive one another, even as Christ has forgiven us. We are NOT perfect!

**TRUTH ALERT:** You WILL mess up and make mistakes.

You will want forgiveness for something you have done or mistakes you have made. We understand forgiveness when we receive it and when we are actually and truthfully sorrowful for our actions. We hope to be restored to a clean slate. We can only forgive others, when we realize how much Jesus has forgiven us by his death.

Forgiveness is an exciting thing to receive. Think of how you felt when you realized your sin was forgiven and Jesus was now Savior and Lord of your life. We want our friends to experience this, too, as we share the Gospel in love and not in fear.

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## APPLY

Think of a time in your life where you dreaded to ask for forgiveness. Maybe it's not the first time you messed up or failed in something. Just the thought of asking for forgiveness makes you sick at your stomach. Think of it this way, if you had someone to go before you to soften the blow or ease the pain of seeking forgiveness, wouldn't that make things easier? This is what Jesus has done for us and we can help others find Jesus too.

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## RESPOND

- Think about a time that you have been forgiven.
- Now think about a time when you had to forgive someone.
- Has there been a time when forgiveness was not given to you by someone? How did you feel?

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## BIG IDEA TO REMEMBER

We forgive others, because we have been forgiven.

**GO**

If there is someone you need to forgive, do it today and invite them to your youth group this week.



**OVERCOME WEEK**

**CHOOSE FORGIVENESS**



## PREPARE WEEK

Preparing your story of  
believing the Good  
News of Jesus.

### CHOOSE FORGIVENESS



My Prayer list for myself:



Today you will learn a creative way to share your faith story.

### WHICH ONE IS GREATER

Begin by asking, which one is greater?

- Revenge or mercy?
- Hate or love?
- Punishment or forgiveness?

First John chapter 1 verse 9 says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

A great way to share your story is to be honest about your own struggles and stories of forgiveness. We all need God’s forgiveness. Use the following questions to share your story on the worksheet on the next page.

1. Describe a time when someone did something wrong to you, and you chose to forgive them.
2. Describe a time when you needed someone to forgive you. Did you ask them to forgive you? How did it make you feel?
3. Describe a time when you asked God to forgive you. How did it feel to know you were forgiven by Him? Was there a Bible verse that spoke to you about it?
4. What would you say to someone who is not sure if God will forgive them for something they have done?



On the next page is the **Prepare Week Worksheet** that will walk you through writing out your faith story.

## PREPARE WEEK WORKSHEET

### WHICH ONE IS GREATER

1. Describe a time when someone did something wrong to you, and you chose to forgive them.
2. Describe a time when you needed someone to forgive you. Did you ask them to forgive you? How did it make you feel?
3. Describe a time when you asked God to forgive you. How did it feel to know you were forgiven by Him? Was there a Bible verse that spoke to you about it?
4. What would you say to someone who is not sure if God will forgive them for something they have done?



Practice writing out how God's forgiveness is a part of your story and share it with someone this week.



## ENGAGE WEEK

Engaging your school  
with the Good News  
of Jesus.

### CHOOSE FORGIVENESS



My Prayer list for my friends who don't know Jesus:

#### GOSPEL S.T.O.R.Y.

#### SCRIPTURE - TRUE - OUR - REAL - YOU

The word **Gospel** means **Good News**. It was used to announce good news about a new king. The good news told about the king's message, actions, and victories. The Gospel of Jesus is found in the Bible. It is the Good News of who Jesus is and what He has done. The Gospel story also tells us who we are, why we are broken, and how Jesus is the King who gave His life to rescue us. We are invited to be a part of God's story by trusting and following Jesus.

SCRIPTURE  
tells us  
who  
Jesus is  
and what  
He has  
done.

Have you ever done something that you wish you could undo? Have you ever wondered if God would forgive you for things you have done wrong? Is there someone who can rescue you from the guilt of past mistakes? The Gospel story tells us that God wants to forgive us. Jesus has the power to forgive us for anything we have done wrong because of who He is.

The Bible tells us the true story about who Jesus is and what He has done. Mark chapter 1 verse 1 tells us exactly who Jesus is: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark says clearly that Jesus is the Son of God. We can look to Jesus to know exactly what God is like. The entire story of the Bible is about how Jesus is coming to rescue people from sin, because He is the true King.

TRUE  
identity  
begins  
with  
knowing  
that God  
created  
us.

But wait, why do we need Jesus to rescue us from our sins? Let me explain.

The story began with God creating all things. He called everything that He made good. He created humans to know Him and to represent Him on the earth (Genesis 1:27). God created you, knows you, and loves

<p><b>TRUE identity cont.</b></p>	<p>you more than you could ever imagine. He has created you to love Him and other people. This is your true identity.</p> <p>Sadly, everything did not remain the way that God created it. Everything became broken.</p>
<p><b>OUR lives are broken by sin.</b></p>	<p>The first humans that God created chose to turn away from Him. They broke their relationship with God. We have all chosen to live our own way, too. We have failed to fulfill God's purpose for our lives to love Him and other people. This is called sin. The Bible says that we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Our lives and the world that we know are broken by sin. Because of this, we feel guilt and disconnected from God. We need someone to forgive us.</p>
<p><b>REAL love is Jesus giving His life for ours.</b></p>	<p>Jesus came with a message of Good News. He was sent by God to rescue us and restore our relationship with God (Luke 19:10). Jesus never sinned. He perfectly loved God and all people. Jesus showed us real love by giving His life for our sins. He died and was buried, but on the third day, God raised Him from the dead. He was seen alive by over 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:3-6). He is the true King who rescued us by His love.</p>
<p><b>YOU are invited into God's story.</b></p>	<p>Jesus often said that He had power to forgive sins (Mark 2:10). His death and resurrection proved that He can forgive anyone who asks Him. He will forgive you! You are invited into God's story. It begins with a choice to trust and follow Jesus.</p>

NEXT PAGE →



**ENGAGE WEEK**

**CHOOSE FORGIVENESS**

## ENGAGE WEEK

### CHOOSE FORGIVENESS

Think about what you just read. If you have decided that you want to begin a relationship with Jesus, you can pray this simple prayer.



PRAY: "God, I believe this Gospel story of Jesus. I know that I am broken. I ask you to forgive me of my sins. I want you to be the King of my life. I choose to trust and follow Jesus today and forever. Amen."

#### YOUR DECISION

Click on QR Code and tell us about your decision.



Who are you going to share the Gospel Message of forgiveness with today?

**DON'T FORGET TO GRAB NEXT  
MONTH'S HOPE GUIDE**



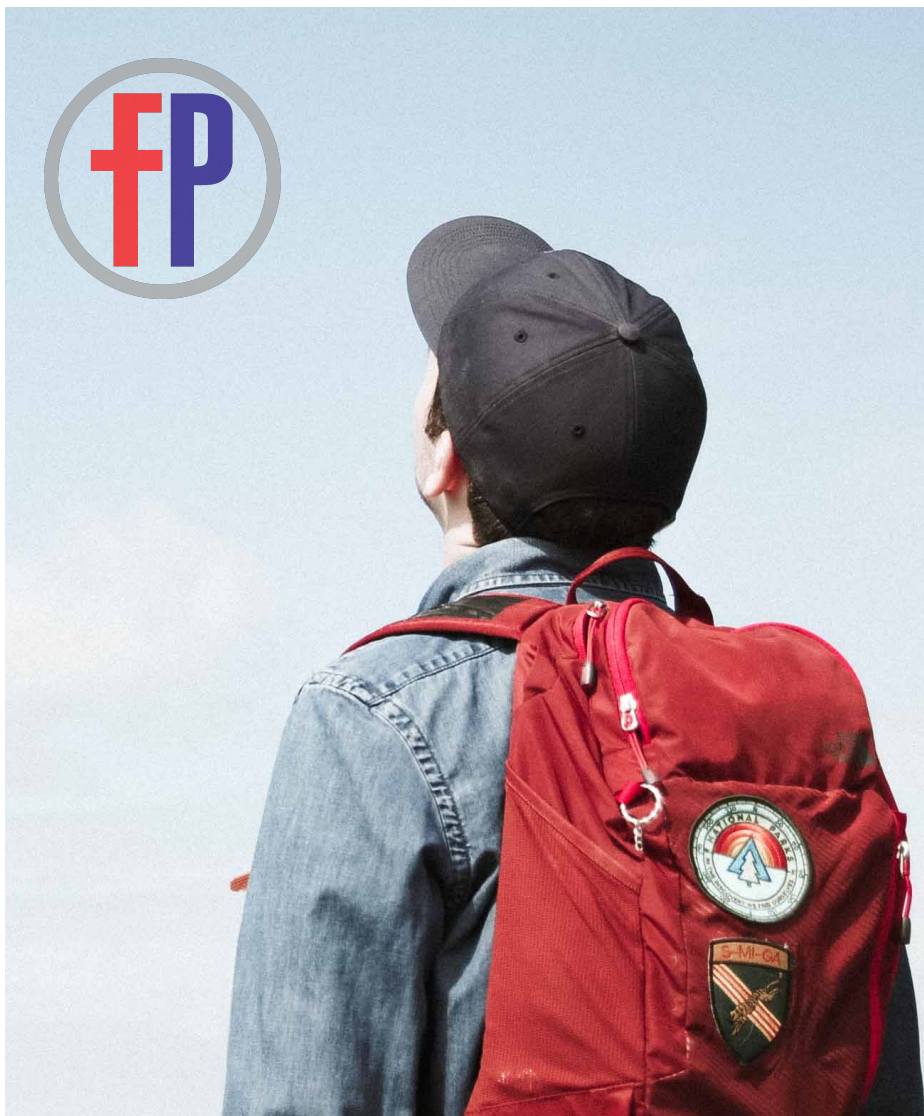
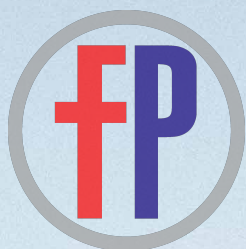
**CHOOSE COMMUNITY**

• ISSUE FOUR •

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Permian Basin First Priority's mission is to unite the local church to impact our schools with the Gospel Message through student-led clubs on campus.



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