

FORGIVENESS FOR SIN

ILLUSTRATION / DEMONSTRATION

PREPARATION:

Gather together as much baseball clothing and equipment as you can, such as a baseball uniform (or just a jersey), a baseball hat, a bat, a glove, and a ball.

DURING THE CHILDREN'S SERMON:

Dressed up as a baseball player, ask kids if they've ever seen a triple play during a ball game. Explain what a triple play is, and give an example of how one could be achieved (for instance, with the bases loaded and no outs, the shortstop could field a ground ball, tag the runner headed for third base, and throw the ball to the second baseman, who throws it to the first baseman). Then tell the children that Jesus once made an awesome triple play. Challenge them to listen for it as you read today's Bible verse.

SCRIPTURE READING

Open the *NIV Adventure Bible*, telling the children, "This is from the book of John, chapter 21, verses 15–17."

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

FEATURE READING / MESSAGE

Say to the children, "There it is, Jesus' big triple play! Did you recognize it? If not, it might help if you knew what happened before this scene took place." Turn to page 1196 in the *NIV Adventure Bible*, telling the kids, "Listen to the first part of this 'Live It!' article from the *Adventure Bible*, called 'Do You Love Me?'"

The night before Jesus was crucified Peter said three times that he did not even know Jesus. Peter lied because he was afraid. But later Peter was so sorry that he cried... After Jesus was raised from the dead, he went to Peter. Read John 21:15–17. How many times did Jesus ask Peter, "Do you love me"?

Tell the children that this was the passage you just read, and let them answer this question before continuing. The answer, of course, is three.

Jesus forgave Peter and even told Peter to feed his lambs and sheep. "Feed my lambs" means to care for the people who believe in Jesus.

Tell the children, "Now it's easier to recognize Jesus' great triple play. He forgave three sins that Peter had committed! Jesus did that in a sort of unusual way, though. Listen to this excerpt from the *NIV Adventure Bible Book of Devotions*."

How did Jesus tell Peter he was forgiven? Jesus didn't tell him, "I forgive you." He said, "Feed my sheep." This meant that he still wanted Peter to follow him and serve him. Peter knew he was forgiven!

Say to the children, "Sometimes people think they've sinned too many times for Jesus to forgive them. Or they think they've committed a sin that's too big for Jesus to forgive. But neither the number of people's sins nor the size of them is too much for Jesus to handle. Because of his sacrifice on the cross, Jesus is able to forgive all sins!"

APPLICATION

Tell the children, "Here's another excerpt from the *NIV Adventure Bible Book of Devotions*."

Jesus made an awesome triple play after he rose from the dead... Peter had gotten scared when Jesus was arrested. Three times Peter had lied, telling people he didn't know Jesus. Now Peter was feeling guilty. Jesus forgave all three of Peter's sins—bang, bang, bang, just like that. You may have let Jesus down many times. But he'll forgive you if you keep loving him and doing your best to follow him.

Turning again to page 1196 in the *NIV Adventure Bible*, tell the kids, "Finally, listen to the last part of the 'Live It!' article from the *Adventure Bible*, called 'Do You Love Me?'"

If you do something wrong and worry that God will be angry, remember this story [about how Jesus forgave Peter's sins]. Tell Jesus that you love him. He will forgive you and even give you important work to do for him.