One day Jesus told a story to teach people that God loves and forgives all sinners. This is the story:

“A man had two sons. One day the younger son came to his father and said, ‘Father, I know that when you die, I will get part of your money. But I want it now. Please give it to me.’

“The father took his money and gave part of it to each son. Soon after this the younger son took all his money and went to live far away from home. ‘Here I can buy anything I want,’ the young man thought. He quickly spent his money doing wrong, sinful things.

“Very soon the young son’s money was gone, and he could not buy food. He could not even find food in gardens or fields because no rain had fallen for a long time and nothing was growing. The son thought, ‘I must find a job so I can earn money to buy food.’

“The son found a farmer who needed a worker. ‘You can feed my pigs,’ the farmer told him. Each day the young man fed the farmer’s pigs. Sometimes he was so hungry that he wanted to eat the pigs’ food himself, but no one would even give him that.

“Then the hungry young man thought about his home. ‘My father makes sure his workers have enough to eat, but here I am starving.’ The young son also thought about his many sins. ‘I have done many wrong things. I am going back home to tell my father how I have sinned against God and against him. I will tell him I am not good enough to be his son. I will ask him to make me one of his servants.’ So the son started for home.

“While the young man was still far down the road, his father saw him coming. How glad the father was to see his son! Quickly he ran down the road to meet him. The father put his arms around his son and kissed him.

“The son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I should not be called your son anymore.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Hurry! Get the best robe and put it on my son. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Make a big dinner with lots of good food. Let’s have a party and be happy, for my son has come home!’ The father loved his son even though he had sinned. The father forgave his son.”

Jesus told this story to teach about God and his love for us sinners. The love of the father in the story reminds us of the love God has for sinners. God is happy to forgive sinners. He wants us to be part of his family of believers.
Parents and Kids

1. Turn this page over and mark the person who was sorry for his sins. Then make a happy face next to the one who forgave the other person. Which person reminds you of us sinners, and which one reminds you of our loving God? Thank God that he loves and forgives us and welcomes us into his family through faith in Jesus!

Teach your child to sing the following words to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

God forgives all my sins, all my sins, all my sins.
God forgives all my sins.
I love and thank you, Lord!

God has made me his own child, his own child, his own child.
God has made me his own child.
I love and thank you, Lord!

2. Have family members discuss how they might feel or respond when someone:
   • pushes them.
   • makes fun of them.
   • steals.
   • mocks them and a friend for being Christians.

Then discuss what you could do differently to be more like God (represented by the father in Jesus’ story). Recall that one way to thank God for his love and forgiveness is by forgiving others and being kind to them. Then ask God to help you show such love and forgiveness.

Pray Together

Dear heavenly Father, we are sorry for our many sins. Thank you for sending Jesus to take them all away. Thank you also for welcoming us into your family. Help us forgive others and be kind to them as a way to show our love and thanks to you. In our Savior’s name we pray. Amen.

Memory Treasure

Galatians 3:26