

All Age Worship Service

(AAW004)

The Lord's Prayer 4: “Forgive us our sins”

© Jane Hulme 2015

ALL AGE WORSHIP
RESOURCES.ORG



THE LORD'S PRAYER 4: "FORGIVE US OUR SINS"

Service Aim:

To teach what it means to pray: "Forgive us our sins"

Biblical Reference(s):

Matthew 6:9-13, 22:37-39, John 8:2-11, Romans 3:23, 1 John 3:4-5, Isaiah 1:18

Outline of Service:

Welcome:	Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer:	
Opening songs:	<u>A couple of songs to draw people into worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Warm up:	Quiz – "Guess the Mr Men and Little Miss characters"
Link:	The bad attitudes of the Mr Men and Little Miss characters is called SIN
Reading 1:	Dramatized John 8:2-11
Talk 1:	We can think we are good because we compare ourselves with others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all sin (Romans 3:23) • Basic concept of sin = "missing the target" • The target = "Love God, love others"
Song:	<u>Songs about the Gospel</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk 2:	Why does sin matter? Using t-shirt illustration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIN Stinks, Stains and Separates us from God
Reading 2:	1John 3:4-5
Talk 2 cont:	Jesus came to set us free from sin and not condemn us
Confession:	Exchanging "red cards of sin" with "white wool gifts of new life."
Absolution:	Isaiah 1:18
Songs:	<u>Song/s of worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Summary:	We have all sinned. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sin is missing the target of loving God and loving others. • Jesus came to set us free from our sins • Because of what Jesus did we can pray "Forgive us our sins"
Prayers:	Praying for God's mercy in different situations.
Final song:	<u>Final song</u> (See Appendix 1)
Blessing:	

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

.....

Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service and explain to people that you will be looking at the line of "The Lord's Prayer" that says "Forgive us our sins."

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like "New Patterns for Worship"¹ that the congregation can say together,
- or the following prayer that the congregation can say together:

**Lord we are here to worship you.
Would you meet with us through your Spirit,
Teach us through your Word,
Show us where we need to change,
And give us all we need to serve you in the world.
For the glory of your name. Amen.**

Opening Songs:

A couple of songs to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

Warm up:

The warm up is a quiz where people have to guess the name of a Mr Men_{TM} or Little Miss_{TM} character when a picture of them is projected on the screen, or shown on a piece of paper. You could invite a few people to come forward and form two teams or you could set up some competition by inviting one side of the congregation to compete against the other side.

The purpose of this warm up is to introduce the concept of sin, so choose six characters that characterise a particular sin, with a balance of three Mr Men_{TM} characters and three Little Miss_{TM} characters². Examples include: Mr Rude, Mr Grumble, Mr Lazy, Little Miss Greedy, Little Miss Naughty and Little Miss Jealous.

Link:

Have you noticed that none of these Mr Men_{TM} or Little Miss_{TM} characters are very nice people?

- They are rude, lazy, grumbly, greedy, jealous or naughty.
- Can anyone tell me what the Bible calls these attitudes?

That's right.....the Bible calls those attitudes SIN.....

- which is the little word with I in the middle.

¹ Church House Publishing – ISBN 0715120603

² The Mr Men_{TM} & Little Miss_{TM} characters can all be found at the following link:

<http://mrmen.com/characters/index.html>

One day when Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, the Pharisees brought a woman who had committed a sin before him.

- They wanted to know what he thought should be done with her.
- Let's see what happened.

Reading 1:

The reading is John 8:2-11 and would work well as a dramatized reading – see Appendix 2. I have changed the word “*adultery*” in the drama to “*broken her marriage promise to her husband*” to make this drama more accessible to children.

Talk 1:

This talk needs the following props: a stone, arrows and a target³.

It is easy to believe that we are good people isn't it when we compare ourselves with others?

We know that we would never murder someone,

- or rob a bank or commit some other evil crime,
- and so we can be tempted to think that we don't need to worry about sin because we are OK.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law in Jesus' day believed that they were good people,

- especially when they compared themselves with the woman that they had made to stand in front of Jesus.

She was a really bad sinner.

- She was someone who deserved to be punished by being stoned to death. (*Hold up a stone*)

But Jesus rather turned the tables on everyone didn't he?

- Instead of agreeing with the Pharisees and teachers of the law that the woman was a terrible sinner and deserved death,
- he invited each one of them to look at their own hearts and see if they were sinless.

And as John tells us, when each person in the crowd looked at their own hearts,

- they realised that they weren't sinless.....
- and so they put down their stones and walked away,
- probably feeling rather corrected.

If Jesus invited each one of us here today to look at our own hearts honestly,

- we too would realise that we are not sinless either.
- In fact the Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*”

So what is sin? To help us understand I need someone to come and help me.

(*Volunteer comes forward and you give them three arrows. Position the target so everyone can see it*)

³ You can purchase a toy bow and arrow set with target very reasonably from amazon at www.amazon.co.uk
© Jane Hulme 2015

I have a target here and I need *N* (name of volunteer) to shoot three of the arrows I have given them,

- so that they hit the target each time.

OK *N* you go and stand over there and I'll stand here (*Ask N to stand so far away from the target that it is totally impossible that their arrows will even hit the target*)

- When you are ready, please shoot one of your arrows and see if you can hit the target. (*N shoots an arrow which shouldn't hit the target!!*)
- Bad luck, try again. (*N shoots an arrow which doesn't hit the target*)
- Have one last try. (*N shoots an arrow which doesn't hit the target*)

Oh dear.....none of your arrows hit the target.....

- In fact they didn't even get anywhere near the target.

That little illustration might help us understand what sin is.

- We could say that sin is missing the target.....
- of not living the way that God created us to live.

Some of us might wonder what the target we are aiming for is.

- Jesus tells us in Matthew's Gospel that the target is to love God with all of our heart, soul and mind,
- and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

So imagine that the target represents the command to love God and love others.

- *N* please pick up your three arrows (*N picks up three arrows*) and please shoot your first arrow again (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we fail to love God.
- *N* please shoot your second arrow (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we fail to love our neighbour.
- *N* please shoot your last arrow (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we always put ourselves first.

We are all guilty of sin because none of us has perfectly loved God or perfectly loved our neighbour.

- It isn't simply those who commit murder, or rob banks that are sinners,
- we also are sinners according to the Bible.

The good news is that Jesus has done something about our sin so let's stand and sing again.

Song:

Songs about the Gospel as per Appendix 1

Talk 2

This talk needs the following props: Two identical white t-shirts, a cross, a paintbrush that you can use to paint with and a variety of "disgusting, smelly" things to cover one t-shirt with (eg black grease, tomato ketchup, curry sauce, branston pickle, mustard, Ribena etc). Before the service begins arrange someone to be your volunteer. They need to wear something that they don't mind getting dirty and stained.

So why does sin matter?

- Why does it matter if I occasionally lie, or cheat or am selfish and so miss the target of loving God and loving other people?

Let me show you.

- Can I invite my volunteer to come forward and put on this lovely white t-shirt?

(Pick up one of the white t-shirts and give it to your volunteer to put on. Keep the other t-shirt out of sight and ensure that you have positioned the cross behind you before the service begins)

I want you to imagine that this t-shirt is the beautiful brand new life that God gives each one of us when we are born.... *(Point to your volunteer's t-shirt)*

- a life He gives us to live in relationship with Him and for His glory.

However, it isn't very long before we begin to mess our life up with sin.....

- Right from when we are little, we can be selfish, often demanding our own way *(Start to "paint" on the volunteer's t-shirt some mustard)*

As we get older we can choose to lie, *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some tomato ketchup)*

- be bad tempered and nasty, *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more tomato ketchup)*
- swear and speak unkind words. *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some branston pickle)*

As we saw earlier with the Mr Men_{TM} and Little Miss_{TM} characters we can grumble about everything, *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more branston pickle)*

- we can be jealous of other people, *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some ribena)*
- mean, lazy and greedy. *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more curry sauce)*

But the worst thing of all is that we have rejected God. *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some black grease)*

- We haven't loved Him *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more black grease)*
- We haven't obeyed Him *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more black grease)*
- In fact we have all ignored Him even though He is our Creator and our Loving Heavenly Father. *(“paint” on the volunteer’s t-shirt some more black grease)*

Oh dear look at N's (name of volunteer) beautiful white t-shirt.....it isn't white anymore is it?

- It is covered in SIN.

There are at least three reasons why sin matters and they all begin with the letter "S."

- Firstly sin STINKS!
- If you come anywhere near N now, you will realise that they don't smell very nice!

Although we cannot actually smell sin with our noses,

- It is like a bad smell!
- If you have ever been close to someone who constantly uses foul language or is always grumbling or really bad tempered, it isn't very nice is it?
- Sin STINKS.

Secondly sin STAINS

- If *N* took this t-shirt off and tried to wash it.....there would be a whole lot of stains left behind on it, no matter what washing powder was used.

Sin stains our souls.

- No matter what we do, we cannot get rid of sin ourselves.
- It is a permanent STAIN on our souls.

And thirdly sin SEPARATES

- Sin separates us from God our Father.
- Our Heavenly Father is holy and beautiful and cannot come anywhere near us while we are covered in sin.

That means that we cannot have the relationship with Him that He created us to have,

- and so our lives can feel empty and meaningless.
- Not only that but our sin makes our Heavenly Father very sad because He loves us and wants us to be part of His family.

Who can help us with our sin problem?

- The sin problem that STINKS, STAINS and SEPARATES us from God,
- Listen to this:

Reading 2:

The reading is 1 John 3:4-5 *“Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that Jesus appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin”* and can be read by a child, young person or adult in a modern version of the Bible.

Talk 2 cont:

Jesus is the One who can help us with our sin problem.

- He doesn't condemn us for our sin, like he didn't condemn the woman in the drama.
- Rather than condemn us, he did something about our sins that cost him everything over two thousand years ago.

Having lived a completely sinless life himself,

- Jesus was arrested and nailed to a cross by people who wanted to get rid of him.

But Jesus' death wasn't an accident or a terrible tragedy.

- When Jesus died, in some amazing way he was taking the punishment that our sin deserves.

On the third day after Jesus was crucified on the cross,

- He rose again from the dead and is alive today,
- reigning as King with His Father in heaven.

We are now offered the possibility of a fresh start,

- like the woman in the drama was.

If we come to Jesus and ask Him to forgive us our sins,

- he takes our dirty life and gives us a brand new life in exchange,
- a bit like this. *(Take off the dirty t-shirt from your volunteer and place it on the cross. Pick up the clean t-shirt and give it to your volunteer to put on)*
- We can now enjoy a relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Not only that but we are given a special gift called the Holy Spirit,

- who lives inside us and helps us to live lives that are centred around loving God and loving others.

Learning to live in a different way takes time and occasionally we will sin.

- When we do, we simply need to come to Jesus, turn away from that sin and pray:
- “Forgive us our sins” and He graciously will.

Confession:

Tell people that you are going to give them the opportunity to ask Jesus to forgive them and cleanse them from their sins.

Pass around red circles of card⁴ and pens / pencils. (You may prefer to give these out at the beginning of the service.

Pray a simple prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to show people the sins that they need to confess. Then invite them to either write those sins on the red card or draw a picture to represent them. During this time, you might like to have some quiet reflective worship music playing in the background for example the song, “What can wash away my sin?” (Robert Lowry arr. Beth Croft © 2010 Thankyou Music)

At the appropriate time, invite people to come and either lay their red cards at the foot of the cross, or pin them to the cross (with the writing facing inwards so that it is not visible), as a symbolic way of saying that they are sorry and that they don’t want to carry on sinning. Invite them to pick up a piece of white wool from a bowl full of pieces of white wool at the foot of the cross and tie it around their wrist as they go and sit down.

Absolution:

When everyone is back in their seats say something like:

God says to us from the book of Isaiah:

*“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”* (Isaiah 1:18)

“Thank you Father for the generous gift of forgiveness, won for us through the blood Jesus shed on the cross. Please fill us with your Spirit so that we can say, “no” to sin, and “yes” to you this week. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Songs:

Song/s of worship as per Appendix 1

⁴ You can purchase these on www.ebay.co.uk Simply put “red card circles cut outs” into the search button and a couple of options will come up.

Summary:

Summarize the service by saying something like:

We have discovered that sin is missing the target of loving God and loving others.

- The problem with sin is that it stinks, stains our souls and separates us from God.
- Jesus came to set us free from our sins when he died on the cross for us.
- Because of what Jesus did, we can pray, "Forgive us our sins" and we will be forgiven.

Prayers:

Prayers could be led by the service leader or by a family or by a Sunday school group etc. Three or four simple prayers would work well asking for God's mercy for a situation caused by sin:

- In the world
- In the nation
- At School and Work,
- At home

End with the Lord's Prayer.

Final Song:

Final song as per Appendix 1

Blessing:

Pray a simple prayer to end the service something like:

As the Lord has forgiven you out of His great love, go from here to use your freedom to love God and love others,

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

[Notices: If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken]

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of songs to draw people into worship. Ideas include:

- Amazing grace (John Newton)
- From where the sun rises (Graham Kendrick © 1996 Make Way Music)
- He is the Lord and He reigns on high (Kevin Prosch © 1991 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing)
- Jesus is greater than the greatest heroes (Gill Hutchinson © 1992 Sea Dream Music)

ii) Songs about the Gospel. Ideas include:

- God so loved that He gave (Ben Cantelon © 2010 Thankyou Music)
- Here is love vast as the ocean (William Rees)
- Jesus we celebrate your victory (John Gibson © 1987 Thankyou Music)
- Jesus you endured my pain (Phil Wickham © 2009 Seems Like Music & Phil Wickham Music)
- Salvation belongs to our God (Adrian Howard & Pat Turner © 1985 Restoration Music Ltd / Sovereign Music UK)
- Some people are fat, some people are thin (Alan Price © 1990 Daybreak Music Ltd)
- Thank you for saving me (Martin Smith © 1993 Curious? Music UK)
- There is a Redeemer (Melody Green © 1982 Ears to Hear Music / Birdwing Music)

iii) Song(s) of worship. Ideas include:

- All of my heart (Doug Marks-Smircich © 1991 Right on the Mark)
- All the riches of his grace (Jan Harrington © 1975 Celebration / Kingsway Music)
- At the cross (love ran red) (Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jonas Myrin, Matt Armstrong, Matt Redman © 2014 Worship Together Music)
- Breathe on me Spirit of Jesus (Tina Pownall © 1987 Sovereign Music UK)
- Everyone needs compassion (Reuben Morgan & Ben Fielding © 2006 Hillsong Publishing)
- Father of life seated on your throne (Walker Beach © 2003 Gateway Create Publishing & Integrity Music)
- Here's a song breaking out (Matt Redman & Alan Price © 1998 Kingsway's Thankyou Music)
- How deep the Father's love for us (Stuart Townend © 1995 Thankyou Music)
- I hear the Saviour say (Elvina M. Hall)
- Lord I come to you (Geoff Bullock © 1992 Word Music/ Maranatha! Music)
- Lord I lift your name on high (Rick Founds © 1989 Maranatha! Praise)
- You chose the cross (Martyn Layzell © 2002 Thankyou Music)

iv) Final song. Ideas include:

- Grace is when God gives us (Paul Crouch / David Mudie © 1989 Daybreak Music Ltd)
- My first love is a blazing fire (Stuart Townend © 1996 Thankyou Music)
- My Jesus, my Saviour (Darlene Zschech © 1993 Darlene Zschech / Hillsong Publishing / Kingsway Music)
- My name is written on your hands (Tim Hughes, Nick Herbert & Ben Cantelon © 2010 Thankyou Music)
- The greatest day in history (Tim Hughes & Ben Cantelon © 2006 Thankyou Music)
- To God be the glory (Fanny J. Crosby)
- When I survey (Isaac Watts)

Appendix 2 – Dramatized Reading: John 8:2-11

Cast: Narrator, Jesus, two Pharisees, woman, crowd

Props: White robe for Jesus, some large stones on the floor

Beforehand: Set up a chair for Jesus centre stage.

Note: I have changed the word “*adultery*” in the drama to “*broken her marriage promise to her husband*” to make this drama more accessible to children.

.....

Narrator: At dawn Jesus appeared again in the temple courts.

(Enter Jesus who walks to the front of church)

The people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them.

(Enter crowd who gather around Jesus. Jesus then sits down on a chair and the people sit down around him, leaving a space in front of him for the Pharisees and the woman)

The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in the act of breaking her marriage promise to her husband.

(Enter two Pharisees who drag in a woman between them. They make her stand in front of Jesus)

They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus:

Pharisee 1: Teacher, this woman was caught breaking her marriage promise to her husband.

Pharisee 2: In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?

(The Pharisees hand out large stones to those in the crowd. They hold their stones in a very threatening way as if they are ready to stone the woman)

Narrator: The Pharisees were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing Jesus. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger.

(Jesus bends down and pretends to write on the ground with his finger)

When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them:

(Jesus straightens up)

Jesus: Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.

(Jesus bends down again and pretends to write on the ground with his finger)

Narrator: Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, *(crowd and Pharisees 1 and 2 put down their stones and exit one at a time with the oldest people leaving first)* the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her:

(Jesus straightens up and speaks directly to the woman)

Jesus: Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?

Woman: No one, sir

Jesus: Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.

(Exit Jesus with the woman)

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.