

#4 Totaled

Theme: God forgives, but that doesn't mean there aren't consequences.

Things You'll Need:

- Safety glasses or some eye protection
- Hammer(s) (Sledgehammer if you want to destroy something epic!)
- Cleanup tools
- Something to DESTROY! (This can be big or small. You could even get creative if you don't have anything and use some old fruit like Gallagher would. lol)

Keep It Safe - Take safety measures and be alert during activity.

Advanced Prep: The whole idea of the object lesson is to find something absolutely awesome to destroy! Get creative and find multiple items if you can. I know in this time of quarantine going somewhere is probably out of the question, but we all have something laying around that we haven't used since Y2K, right?

Other than that, just gather the materials and find a safe place to use as your arena of destruction. That's all the prep you need!

Activity: First, make sure you go over the safety concerns with everyone involved. Explain to everyone that you are about to destroy something (or many things) and you need their help.

Next, time to take some swings! Let everyone have their turn and have some fun with it. I suggest some pump up music in the background and maybe some family chants of encouragement. Haha. Be sure to destroy the object to the point of no return, but make sure you start the devotional lesson before they get too tired of the activity. They can always destroy some more after the lesson!

Lesson: Normally, it would be totally wrong for us to pound on something like this, would you agree? But we pounded on this today because I want to help you understand a very important principle from God's Word.

The Bible makes it clear that God forgives us for the wrong things we do if we confess those sins to him.

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. (1 John 1:9)

That's really great news. But sometimes people misunderstand forgiveness. They think as long as God will forgive them, they can go ahead and do what they want—even though they know it is wrong. They figure that they'll just ask God to forgive them afterward. They think that's all there is to it, but they're forgetting something important.

Even though God forgives, there are still consequences.

There is often damage done that can't be fixed. Like when we pounded this (fill in the blank), we destroyed something. Nobody here is in trouble, but we've caused damage that can't simply be fixed. Even though we can be forgiven, it doesn't mean life can go on just as though we'd never sinned.

- Can anybody give me an example of how this is true?
 - ❑ If someone says something unkind to another person, that person may still have very real hurt about what was said for years afterward—even though they've forgiven the person who said the hurtful things.
 - ❑ If someone steals a car, the owner may forgive them but the state will still have to punish them. There are penalties and consequences for things we do that are wrong.
 - ❑ If someone murders another person, there will be a trial and sentencing. Likely the murderer will go to jail, even if they said they were sorry and the victim's family forgave them.
 - ❑ If someone lies to their mom or dad, their parent may forgive them, but there are still consequences. They may still be punished for the lie. And even if they aren't punished, there is still a penalty to be paid . . . and that is a loss of trust. Those parents will not be able to trust their son or daughter like they did before the lie.
 - ❑ If someone sneaks and uses drugs or alcohol, their parents may forgive them, but the lasting effects of the drugs—or an addiction—may still haunt them.

Forgiveness removes the penalty for sin, but not necessarily the consequences.

- Can you think of any Bible characters who messed up and were forgiven but still had to deal with the consequences of their sin?
 - ❑ **Adam and Eve.** God forgave, but the consequences were unfathomable.
 - ❑ **Moses killing the Egyptian.** God forgave, but there were consequences . . . like having to leave his home and live as a fugitive in the desert for forty years.
 - ❑ **Moses striking the rock to get water from it.** God forgave, but Moses also lost his privilege to go into the Promised Land with his people.
 - ❑ **Samson.** He sinned over and over again. God clearly forgave, but there were consequences. Samson lost his sight, his freedom, and finally his life because of the bad decisions he'd made.
 - ❑ **David and Bathsheba.** God forgave, but there were massive consequences—including the death of their illegitimate baby.

Do you see how foolish it is to think, I can do what I want—and just ask God to forgive me later?

God forgives, but often the scars of our sin are tough to live with.

Summing It Up: Doing wrong things can be fun—just like when we pounded this (fill in the blank) with our hammers. We can be forgiven when we do wrong things, but we must be very careful not to be casual about sinning just because we know God will forgive us. There are consequences for sin. There are scars. Regrets. Things that are hard to live with. Our sin, even though forgiven, can cripple us emotionally.

Let me read you a verse from Proverbs, the book of wisdom.

The highway of the upright avoids evil; those who guard their ways preserve their lives. (16:17)

Stay on track, kids. Stay on the right paths. Do the right things. By being careful about what you do and don't do, you're actually guarding your own life. You're protecting yourself from nasty consequences that come from choosing to do the wrong things.

Shoemaker, Tim. *The Very Best, Hands-On, Kinda Dangerous Family Devotions* (pp. 46-50). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.