



## SESSION TWO

# Nails Fix Everything

### Key Verses

[God] made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross. This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

*Colossians 1:20–22 NLT*

## LEADER PREPARATION

It is recommended that you read chapter 4, “The Greatest Cover-Up of All Time,” in *He Chose You* by Max Lucado before you teach so you will be well acquainted with the stories and principles this lesson is based on.

### Materials Needed:

- Student Handouts (1 per student)
- Pens (1 per student)
- Bibles
- Red paint and sponge paintbrushes (optional)
- Wooden cross, nails, and a hammer (optional)

## SESSION TWO OUTLINE

### Large Group Lesson: He Chose to Forgive Us

20 minutes

Introduction

Pair Up: Yard Sale Gift

Teaching

Application

### Small Group Discussion

20 minutes

Activity: God Haters

Questions about Being God's Enemies

Questions about Being God's Friends

Activity: He Nailed It



## LARGE GROUP LESSON: He Chose to Forgive Us

### I. Introduction

Today we are talking about another gift of Easter, and this one is really odd—another one of those things you don't typically think of as a gift. Before I tell you what gift we're talking about today, imagine you have decided to give a gift to your best friend. You put a lot of thought into it and take time to create or purchase something you are certain will make this person very happy. As the time for giving your gift approaches, you begin to imagine your friend's reaction . . .

#### PAIR UP: Yard Sale Gift, Part 1

Turn to the person next to you and describe the kind of response you hope your friend will have. What is the best response you could hope for—the response that would convince you that your friend has not only loved your gift but appreciated how much effort and thought you put into giving it?

*After about a minute of discussion, ask students to share some of their responses with the group.*

#### PAIR UP: Yard Sale Gift, Part 2

Now imagine a year has passed. You're helping this same friend prepare for an upcoming yard sale when you notice your gift among the items in a box designated for the sale. What thoughts are running through your mind?

*After about a minute of discussion, ask students to share some of their responses with the group. Then ask for responses to this question:*

How might your discovery of the gift in the yard sale box change the way you relate to your friend?

## II. Teaching

The Easter story is the story about how God left his home on a quest to offer us a gift. The gift was reconciliation—a big word that means that two people who used to be enemies are now at peace with each other; they are friends. The symbol for his gift of reconciliation is something odd—on its own it would not usually be considered a gift—it is a nail.

A. Nails fix broken things. They join things that are separated and make them whole.

1. We were separated from God because of our sins.
2. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, so were our sins (see Colossians 2:14). God nailed the list of our sins—and the sins of the whole world—to that cross.
3. The very hands that created the universe, healed the sick, blessed the children, fed the hungry, and even raised the dead were nailed, bloody, to the cross. To this day there are “nail marks in his hands” (John 20:25).
4. Now we can be friends with God. Our sins made us his enemy, but now we can be at peace with God (see 2 Corinthians 5:18–19).

B. Nails were God's gift to us. He chose the nails.

1. Every time Jesus healed a sick person or forgave a sinner, he drove the nails into his own hands (see Isaiah 53:5–6).
2. In chapter 4 of book by Max Lucado we are reading, he says, “He knew the price of those sins was death. He knew the source of those sins was you, and since he couldn't bear the thought of eternity without you, he chose the nails.” (Max Lucado, *He Chose You*, page 51)

## III. Application

- A. The hands that formed you in your mother's womb are the hands that were stretched out and willingly nailed to the cross. All your sins—greed, lies, jealousy, pride, rebellion—and all your mistakes were nailed there with Jesus. He nailed it! *The nails fixed everything.*
- B. How should we respond? Better yet, think back to our earlier discussion about your gift to your friend, and tell me, how do you think we should NOT respond?

*Allow students to answer this question. Fill in as necessary with these points:*

- We should NOT ignore this gift. Jesus went to great lengths to offer us the chance to be reconciled to God. It would be the height of ingratitude to and rudeness to just act as if it never happened.
- We should NOT cast it aside. That's saying we would rather stay God's enemy.

So, how DO we respond?

*Allow students to answer this question. Fill in as necessary with these points:*

- As Christians, we should always live in a way that shows how grateful we are for Jesus' sacrifice for us. We can do this by loving him and loving others, obeying him, living like him.
- If you are not a Christian, believe God's love for you as shown in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Receive Jesus Christ as your Savior today as you invite him into your life!

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

*At this time, if your group is larger than 10 students, break up into discussion groups of 4 to 6, with an adult facilitator or student leader. Pass out the student handouts, pens, and Bibles.*

Materials Needed:

- Student Handouts (1 per student)
- Pens (1 per student)
- Bibles

*Have a volunteer read the Key Verses out loud.*

[God] made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross. This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

—*Colossians 1:20–22 NLT*

### Activity: God-Haters

- How did Paul describe us before Christ's blood made peace between us and God?

**Say something like:** The Greek word Paul used for enemies means, in today's language, "haters." To better understand what this enemy condition really means, I'm going to set a timer for one minute; use the space provided on your handout to speed-write a list of whoever comes to mind in connection with the phrases "enemies of God" or "God-haters." For example, the list might include wicked characters from the Bible or world history, or categories of those who have committed evil acts such as human traffickers or terrorists.

- My list of "enemies of God" and "God haters"

*After students have had a few minutes to write out their lists, have every student read their list out loud, but have them add one name to the end of their list: the name of the person sitting to their left.*

### Questions about Being God's Enemy:

*After everyone is done reading their lists, use the questions that follow to continue your discussion.*

1. What similarities or differences do you notice about everyone's lists? What do your lists say about what you think it means to be an enemy of God?
2. What is it like to hear your own name on a list of God's enemies and to know that it's true—that it accurately describes your condition before you gave your life to Christ?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being a God-hater, how would you rate how much of an enemy of God you were? What makes it hard to accept that you really were God's enemy?

### Questions about Being God's Friend:

1. The gift of the nail is that we get to be God's friends—we can have peace with God. Colossians 1:22 says, "You are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault." This is the opposite extreme of being God's enemy. Do you find this truth about yourself—that you are holy and blameless in God's sight—easier to believe and accept than the truth about being God's enemy? Why or why not?

### Activity: He Nailed It

#### Materials Needed:

- Student Handouts (1 per student)
- Pens (1 per student)
- Red paint and sponge paintbrushes (optional)
- Wooden cross, nails, and a hammer (optional)

*Have students move apart from each other and sit in such a way as they have privacy for this exercise. Emphasize that this exercise is to remain completely private between them and God; no one is to try to see anyone else's answers.*

**Read these instructions:** To get just a small idea of how much God has forgiven you for, write down every sin that you committed in the last two days. Try to leave nothing out—the harsh words, the bad attitudes, the selfish actions, the good things you should have done but you didn't. Don't rush; try to come up with as complete a list as possible. After you are satisfied that you have listed everything you can remember, read back through the list—what if you had to list everything from the last month, or year!—and tell God the wrong you have done or the good you have not done. Express your regret, and pray this verse as your prayer:

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Philippians 2:13 NLT

*Give students several minutes to write their lists on their handouts. Then, to demonstrate God's gift of forgiveness that gives us peace with God, have the students do one of the following activities, and close the meeting with a time of private prayer and reflection.*

- Option A: Tear up the list. Thank God for his forgiveness and sacrifice so we can have peace with him.
- Option B: Cover the list with red paint to illustrate how Christ's blood covers our sins. Thank God for his forgiveness and sacrifice so we can have peace with him.
- Option C: Nail the folded-up list to the cross. Thank God for his forgiveness and sacrifice so we can have peace with him.

### Easter/Lent Focus:

We are challenging all our students to join with the rest of the church and read *He Chose You* in the weeks leading up to Easter. This week's readings will help us understand the true cost of forgiveness. Please read chapters 4–6 in *He Chose You*.