

**OBJECT LESSON****Forgiveness Heals**

[10 min]

Supplies

- modeling dough (1 handful per child)
- heart-shaped cookie or modeling dough cutters (1 for each adult or teen leader)
- wax paper

Break Apart Hearts

Say: **Today we're learning that God is forgiving, and we heard how Jesus showed God's forgiveness by forgiving his friend Peter. It must have helped Peter's heart feel so much better to know Jesus forgave him and still wanted to be his friend.**

Share how *you* feel when you do something wrong.

Ask: • **How do *you* feel when you do something wrong?** Kids might say they feel sad, they cry, or they feel like they lost a friend.

Say: **God forgives us, too, when we do wrong. It might feel like our hearts are broken. Let's do something to help us think about that.**

Give each child a handful of modeling dough, and distribute the cookie cutters. Have kids smash the dough in their hands and put it on the wax paper. Then have adult or teen helpers use the cookie cutters to make hearts in the dough. Have each child hold his or her dough heart on one palm.

Say: **These hearts are in good shape. They're whole and happy! When we do wrong, our hearts don't feel so great.** Have kids pull apart their dough hearts.

Say: **We might try to make our hearts feel better.** Have kids try to put their hearts back together so they look exactly like they did before kids pulled them apart. Allow a few minutes for everyone to work. Check in with kids on why they can or can't get their hearts to look like they did before they were pulled apart, and guide the discovery that it's nearly impossible to perfectly reassemble the hearts.

Make Repaired Hearts

Say: **Our hearts get messy when we do wrong. We feel sad or like we want to hide, and we can't fix our hearts all on our own, just like you couldn't get the dough hearts back together just right. When we ask God to forgive us, something awesome happens to our hearts!**

Have leaders help kids roll and then flatten their portions of dough and then cut fresh hearts using the cookie cutters.

Say: **Starting over with a fresh dough heart made it new—like your heart had never been torn apart. God is forgiving, so when we do wrong, we can ask God to forgive us. God will *always* forgive us! God's forgiveness gives our hearts a new start, and we learn we can do things differently the next time so our hearts don't end up in the same mess again.**