For Individual or Group

Seventy Times Seven

Ages 7-10

Sweet Revenge?

The Lord illustrated His teaching about forgiving others with a story of a king who forgave a servant a large debt. But instead of also acting in a forgiving manner, the servant treated a man who owed him a small debt harshly. This activity explores the idea that "payback" or revenge may seem like a sweet idea—but makes our lives bitter. Children taste foods that smell sweet but taste bitter.



1. Seat children in a circle and ask questions such as
   - How do you feel when someone does something unkind to you?
   - Is it easy or difficult to forgive someone who has hurt your feelings, or taken something that's yours?
   - What might you feel like doing to someone who hurts you?
   - Sometimes evil spirits want us to "pay-back" or get revenge for something another person has done. Have you experienced this? What happened?
   - Did taking revenge feel like a good idea? Is revenge a good idea? Why or why not?"
2. Let's think about something that may seem good—but perhaps is not. Take a sample food around for the children to smell. Ask them if it smells sweet. Once children have answered, ask how they think it might taste. Ask for a volunteer to taste the food and tell others what it is like. Did you think it would taste like that? What did you expect?
3. Repeat with other foods if desired.
4. Foods that smell sweet but taste bitter are like things that might sound like a good idea but be "bitter" in our lives—like revenge. How does paying someone back feel? It might feel good at first, but how does it feel later?
5. What does the Lord ask us to do when someone does something to hurt us? Is forgiving others easy or hard? The Lord told Peter we should forgive others up to seventy times seven—or in other words, as many times as we need to forgive.
6. The Word says that when we do what is right, we smell good to the Lord—and when we are selfish, we smell bad. Angels in heaven smell good to others, because loving the Lord makes them smell good. But people living in hell smell bad—like rotten food. When love and forgive others, we smell good to the Lord, and to others around us.

Materials Needed

spoons for tasting; foods that smell sweet but taste bitter, such as cinnamon, vanilla extract, unsweetened cocoa powder, etc.
Optional: brown paper bags to hide food's identity

Prepare in Advance

Gather supplies. *Optional*: hide food containers in brown bags so they cannot be identified by sight.

New Church Concept Smells

In heaven the feelings of delight that come from angel's loves are turned into odors like fragrances, sweet smells, pleasant breezes, and the delicious sensations we experience on a morning in spring. In hell the feelings of delight that come from devils' and satans' loves are turned into the kind of foul odors, rotten smells, and stenches given off by ponds full of garbage and sewage. See *True Christian Religion* 569

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