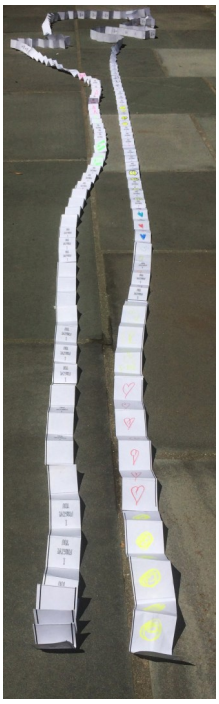
Seventy Times Seven Accordion



In this activity students work together to create a visual depiction of how many times the Lord asks us to forgive other people. Each student makes an accordion of 70 squares. Seven of these accordions are then joined to make one long 70 x 7 accordion.

1. During the Lord's life on earth, the disciple Peter once asked Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?". The Lord responded, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (See Matthew 18:21-22.) Do you know how many 70 x 7 is? It's a lot of times that the Lord says we should forgive!
2. Sometimes it can be hard to forgive someone who hurts us in some way. The Lord wants us to remember that we, too, make plenty of mistakes. The Lord will always forgive things we do wrong if we ask for His help. He wants us to forgive other people too. Today, we're going to make a project that shows how much the Lord wants us to try to forgive.
3. Give each student 2 copies of the *Accordion Pieces* (p. 2) and a pair of scissors. Explain that each person will make an accordion with 70 squares.
4. Show students how to cut apart the strips on the heavy black lines.
5. Tape the strips together by putting the tab at the end of one strip under the first square of another strip.
6. Take the single long strip and make it into an accordion by folding back and forth along the thin black lines.
7. If time permits, encourage students to add images or statements to some of their blank squares. They might think about what they would want to hear or feel when they tell someone they are sorry. Ideas include smiley faces or hearts, or statements like "It's OK", "I understand", "Thanks for saying sorry."
8. Help students tape their strips of 70 squares together. Do this in groups of 7, adding additional strips the teacher has made ahead of time as needed.
9. Have a student hold one end of the accordion and stretch it out as far as it will go for another student to hold the other end. Look at how much 70 x 7 is! This is how many times the Lord told Peter we are to forgive others.
10. The New Church teaches us one additional truth about what the Lord told Peter. In the Word, whenever the number 7 is mentioned, it means completeness or wholeness. So really, 70 x 7 means that we should *always* forgive others!

Materials Needed

2 copies of *Accordion Pieces* p. 2 for each student; pens, crayons or colored pencils; scissors; tape

Prepare in Advance

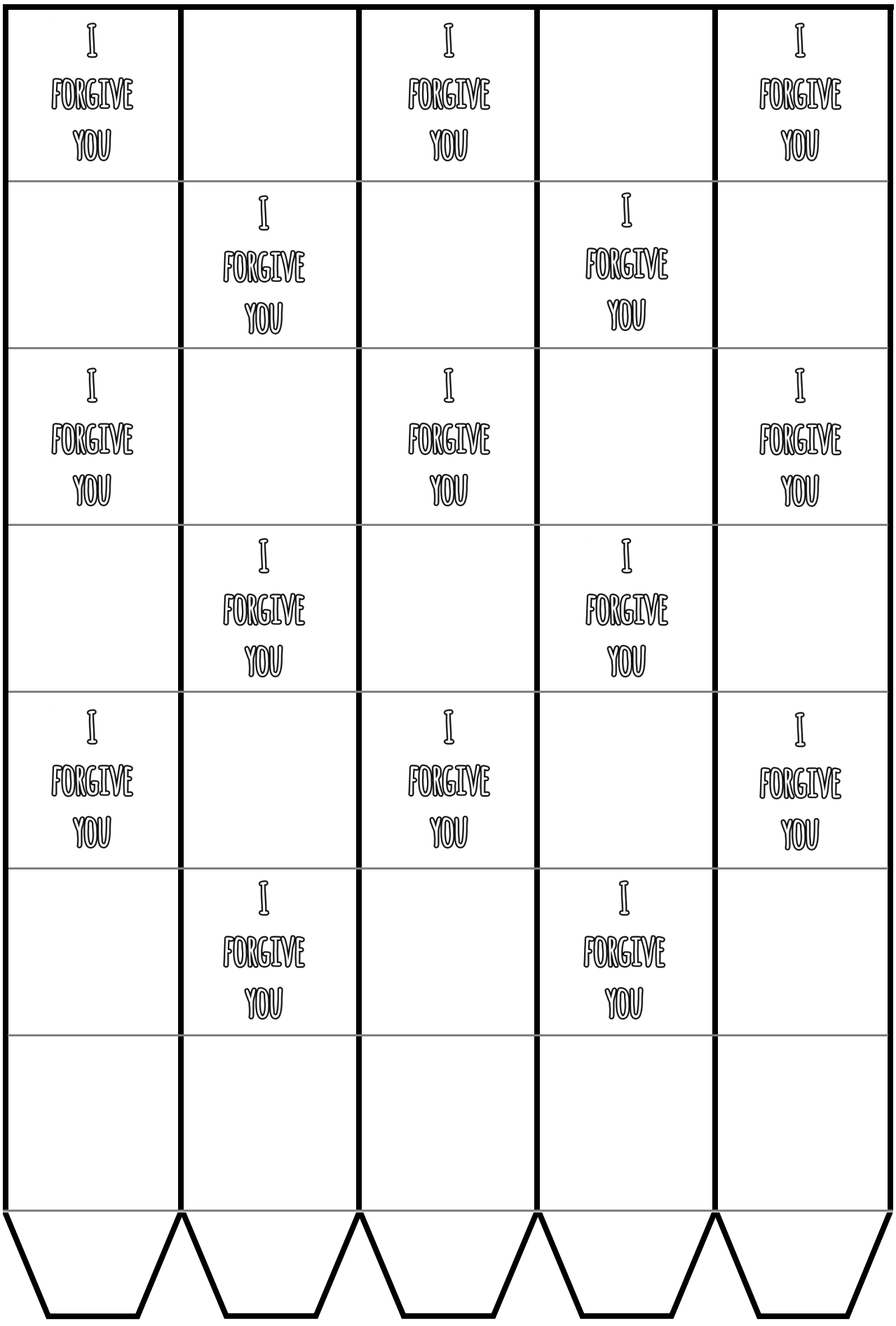
If you have fewer than 7 students put together the extra sets of 70 that will be needed to make 70 x 7. If you have more than 7 students, make up enough extra sets to finish with two 70 x 7 accordions.

New Church Concept Forgiveness

The Lord forgives everyone's sins. He does not accuse us or keep score. However, He cannot take our sins away except by the laws of His divine providence; for when Peter asked Him how many times he should forgive someone who had sinned against him, whether seven was enough, He said that Peter should forgive not seven times but seventy times seven times. What does this tell us about the Lord, who is mercy itself? *Divine Providence* 280

© 2022 General Church of the New Jerusalem

Forgiveness Accordion Pieces



© 2022 General Church of the New Jerusalem