



WEEK FOUR

THE STORY OF THE LOST SON • LUKE 15:11-24

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ASK THIS:

WHEN HAS SOMEONE FORGIVEN YOU?



DO THIS:



While in the car, ask your preteen, "Is there anything that is keeping you from forgiving someone?" Try to talk through it; what happened, why it's hard to forgive, and then how we can lose when we choose to not forgive someone. Tell about a time you had to choose forgiveness even when you didn't want to.



REMEMBER THIS:

"Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you."

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIrV

**FORGIVENESS:**  
DECIDING THAT SOMEONE WHO HAS WRONGED YOU DOESN'T HAVE TO PAY



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FORGIVENESS ROCKS

By Mike Clear

As a child, growing up, I liked rocks. I liked to collect rocks, make towers out of rocks, and skipping rocks. I had this habit of gathering rocks everywhere I went. I would put the rocks I collected in my pockets and carry them around with me wherever I would go. Here's what I discovered: Rocks are heavy.

As a child growing up, I also dealt with pain in my life. Some of it was trivial, like getting picked on by my sisters. Some of the pain I dealt with though was much more hurtful, including my dad's angry outbursts growing up, and my parent's divorce and ugly custody battle when I was ten.

Fast forward a few decades later, and now I find myself in the position, as a parent, trying to teach my kids about the idea and importance of forgiveness. I would do anything to help my kids avoid any semblance of hurt and pain in their lives; however, I know that's just not possible.

My kids will experience pain both inside and outside of my control. For me, the focus instead is on what my kids will do with those hurts when they do happen. To help illustrate forgiveness for them, I decided to reach back into my childhood and pull out my old trusted friends—Rocks.

I want my kids to know that when they've been hurt by other people's words or actions, they have a choice to make. They can hold on to that hurt inside but that's much like carrying around a big rock with them everywhere they go. The more hurt and anger they hold onto, the bigger the rock they carry around which can really weigh them down and consume their life.

Instead, I try to encourage our kids to let go of their hurt and anger by choosing to forgive. When someone has wronged them, I give them a rock and encourage them to throw it, not at the one who hurt them, but rather as far as they can into the creek behind our house. When they throw their rock, I explain to them that it represents the idea of letting their anger go and deciding that the person who has wronged them doesn't have to pay.

My hope for my family and yours is that together we will discover what God can do when we choose to forgive.



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