



## House Party Parent Guide March 29

### Bottom Line

When you don't forgive, you miss out.

### Small Group Discussion

- Review the story and use the following questions to reinforce the lesson learned from the story.
  - What was the father's response to the younger brother's return? What was the older brother's response to his brother's return? Were they the same?
  - How would you describe the older brother when he found out his father threw a party celebrating the younger son's return? (If necessary, read Luke 15:28-29)
  - What was the older brother missing out on by choosing to hold onto his negative emotions toward his brother? What was the father's response to his older son? (Luke 15:31)

### Main Idea:

Even though what his younger brother did was wrong, the older son had a choice to make. The older brother could decide to let go of his anger and bitterness or he could hold on to it and decide his younger brother should pay.

### Life App Definition:

Forgiveness-deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay.

## **Object Lesson**

- Place a wrapped piece of candy in front of your child and a cotton ball (or another object to hold)
- Ask your child to think of something they may be holding against someone.
  - Maybe someone treated them unkindly or unfairly.
  - Maybe someone flattened a tire on their bike or broke their favorite toy.
  - Maybe they are angry at someone for not doing what they said they would do.
  - If they can't think of anything, have them think about how the older brother in the story was holding onto his anger and resentment.
- Explain that the cotton ball (or object) represents something you're holding against someone. Tell them to hold on to the cotton ball/object with both hands and squeeze as tightly as they can.
  - While squeezing the cotton ball with both hands, challenge them to unwrap the candy using only their hands.
- This is pretty tough to do. Just like you cannot grab onto the candy while focusing on squeezing the cotton ball, you could miss out on a lot while you are focusing on holding a grudge against someone. Name some things you could be missing out on.  
(e.g. friendships, good times with others, joy, a party [like the older brother missed out on], etc.)
- Even if forgiveness isn't always fair do you still need to forgive?
- Share a time with your child when you were treated unfairly or when you were mad at someone for how they treated you. Did you forgive them right away? Did it take time? How did you feel when you finally forgave them?
- When we forgive others, it releases us to be able to receive God's blessings and forgiveness. We want to forgive others because God forgave us.

## **Memory Verse**

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

**Prayer**

Pray with your child to ask for God's help with forgiveness.

Dear God,

We are so thankful for Your forgiveness and Your love. We pray that you give us strength to forgive others even when it is not fair. Please help us to let go of anything that we may be holding against others so we don't miss out on the joy of Your forgiveness. Help us to show others Your love during this difficult time and help to bring them peace. In Your name we pray, Amen !!