



## The Prodigal Son: Rembrandt

Week 6 - Forgiveness  
Repentance and Forgiveness

Diocesan Lent Course

FOR YOUTH



YEAR OF PRAYER 2018

# Week 6 - Forgiveness

## Prayer, Repentance and Forgiveness

### Aim

For the young people to think about repentance and forgiveness. To understand that we all mess up and forgiveness is key for healthy relationships between people as well as between us and God.

### Learning outcomes

Not forgiving others is only a burden to ourselves. God wants us to be completely open and honest with him about our thoughts, actions and desires. We develop a deep relationship with anyone through honesty and sharing. The same applies to our relationship with God. This includes sharing our disappointments and saying sorry for the times that we've messed up, learning to accept forgiveness for ourselves as well as forgiving others.

### Materials needed

- A copy of Rembrandt's Prodigal Son. either on a screen or printed out large enough for all to see.
- Projector, screen and speakers with video and song queued up.
- Trays and Sand for each young person
- Felt tip pens (not permanent markers)
- Soap and water in bowls
- Old CDs painted on the silver side with chalkboard paint - enough for all young people in the group.
- String and cocktail sticks or other pointy objects for scraping the CDs
- Enough potatoes for every young person
- Two buckets

Any videos or downloadable resources needed in this session can be accessed from:

[youth.chichester.anglican.org/lent](http://youth.chichester.anglican.org/lent)

Alternatively; from the Diocesan youth website navigate to 'Year of Prayer' then 'Lent Course for Youth'

## Breathe...Pray...Let's begin...

### Quick recap

At the beginning of the session ask the young people to reflect back on last week's session. Did they thank anybody during the week? Did they commit any random acts of kindness during the week? Give some time for them to share what they did. What reactions did they get?

# Icebreaker

## Rubbish Wars

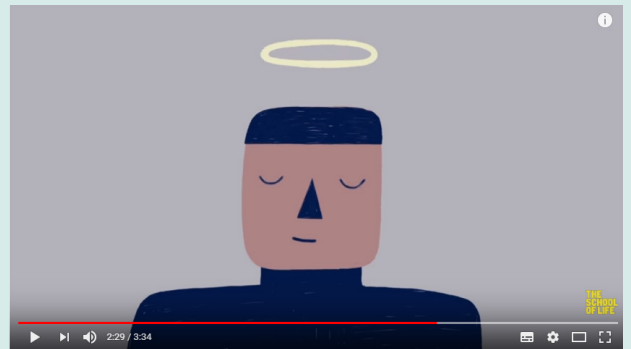
Cover the floor in rubbish and using masking tape mark a line on the floor dividing the room in two. Try to ensure that there are equal amounts of rubbish on each side. Split your group into two teams. They have 1 minute to try and get all the rubbish from their side of the line onto the other side of the line. When a minute is up count up the rubbish on each side of the line, the winning team is the one with the least rubbish. If you access to a net that you can put up through the room this works well too.

## Video

This video is from a well known YouTube channel called School of Life. This video looks at the important of forgiveness and the dangers of carrying unforgiveness. You can access it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-K5btaxEFY>

Or through the website.

You can use this video as an introduction or slot it in to the session later on.



# Creative Prayer Ideas

## Sand prayers

Give individual young people trays with sand on. They can write in the sand things they want to say sorry for, or draw a picture to represent it. Then whilst praying shake the tray to rub out anything they've written.

## Washed away

Use felt tips (not permanent markers!) to write the names of people that they feel have done wrong to them on their hands. There may be lots written on their hands and if they don't want to use words they can draw to represent what they're feeling. When they've finished get them to wash their hands to represent forgiving those they feel have wronged them. This is not an easy process so as they do they should pray that God takes away the burden of unforgiveness and helps them to forgive.

You may want to put out some bowls of water and soap that they young people can use to wash their hands without having to leave the main room where everybody else is. It might be appropriate to play some music in the background and create some quiet to create an atmosphere of prayer.

# Bible Reading

## Parable of the Lost Son :: Luke 15:11-24

To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

"A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

"When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant."' "

"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'

"But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

## Reflection

Listen to the song 'Let You Down' by NF. This is a song that has been in the charts this year which young people will likely recognise.

You can access the lyrics here: <http://www.songlyrics.com/nf/let-you-down-lyrics/>

Whilst the song is playing put up the image of The Prodigal Son by Rembrandt.

**When the song has finished ask the young people:**



What do you **think** is being depicted in the painting?

What did you **feel** whilst listening to the song and examining the painting?

What captures your **imagination** in this image?

How does this inform the way you understand who God is?

# Game

## **Poop the potato**

You may have seen this game circulated online in the last year or so. It's a simple game played in teams. Each player is given a potato which they have to hold between their legs, transport and deposit it in a bucket at the opposite end of the room. The team with the most potatoes in their bucket at the end is the winner.

Only one person at a time from each team can approach the bucket and they must hold the potato between their legs to carry it to the bucket. If they drop the potato on the way to the bucket they cannot pick it up, that potato is lost. When they reach the bucket they may also not use their hands but instead position themselves over the bucket in order to drop the potato from between their legs.

This game represents the challenge that carrying a grudge can present. It damages friendships, breeds mistrust and prevents us from feeling compassion and care for others.

## Discussion

Think about the story of the lost son, the lost coin and the lost sheep. What do these stories tell us about the nature of God? What does this have to do with forgiveness? **In the story of the lost sheep, the sheep that goes off is like the prodigal son. It was the bad sheep that left the herd that didn't follow the shepherd's voice. Yet the shepherd leaves the others behind to go and find him. The prodigal son is welcomed home with open arms.**

How easy do you find it to forgive? **What does not forgiving somebody do to the person that you are holding a grudge against? Unforgiveness only harms the person carrying it. It does nothing to the other person. In fact it's when you see the other person or hear about something that they've done you get that feeling of hatred and disdain build up inside you. We need to learn to forgive others and recognise that God forgives us and forgives the other person for whatever they've done wrong. For God the most important thing is relationship.**

## Takeaway

### **Something beautiful from something ugly**

Righting a wrong, saying sorry and making something right with somebody. Perhaps there is something that you feel guilty for and want to ask for forgiveness.

Hand out CDs that have been painted with blackboard paint. Give out a CD to each young person with a piece of string and a toothpick or other pointed object. Give them some time to be creative and scratch a beautiful design into the CD. They can doodle, write a bible verse or promise from God. As they scratch away the black paint the shiny silver colour of the CD underneath will shine through. They can take this home with them and use the string to hang it in a window where the light will shine through the areas without paint. This can serve as a reminder of their forgiveness and a prompt to pray.