

"School was rotten today," Kevin said.

"Rotten? Why?" Dad asked. "Was there broccoli in your hot lunch again?"

"No." Kevin grimaced. "But I do hate broccoli. School was rotten because my teacher, Mr. Harper, got arrested for drugs. A bunch of parents are trying to get him fired."

Dad was stunned. "Kevin, are you sure? I've known Ron Harper for years. Is he still in jail?"

Kevin shook his head. "No, it happened fifteen years ago, when he was in college."

"Then why are people talking about this now?" Dad asked.

"Someone found out about it online, so now everyone's mad. I never liked Mr. Harper anyway. He gives tons of homework and quizzes. But the worst thing is, he always says, 'Don't use drugs, not ever, not even once.'"

"Maybe that's because he cares about you and knows from experience that drugs can destroy your life," said Dad. "You know, Kevin, it's easy to believe bad things about someone you don't like."

Kevin shrugged. "Some kids are transferring out of his class. Can I transfer too?"

"I want to hear about this from Mr. Harper himself. I'll see if he can meet me for coffee. Until then, you aren't to gossip about this with anyone, understand? You know the Bible warns against gossip."

"Even if it's true?"

"Especially if it's true," said Dad.

That evening, Kevin's dad called him for dinner. "Kevin, before we eat, let's talk. Mr. Harper told me that it's true he was arrested for drugs in college. He spent many months in jail and paid a big fine, and he deeply regrets doing what he did. He also told your school principal about his arrest before he was hired as a teacher." Dad sighed heavily. "Kevin, don't forget that as Christians, our sins have been buried in the deepest sea of God's forgiveness, and--"

"I know," said Kevin. "If Jesus can forgive us, we can forgive Mr. Harper."

"Absolutely. Forgiveness doesn't always mean we trust people to be in certain positions, but in Mr. Harper's case, I can see he's changed, and I trust him to be a good teacher."

Kevin nodded, then looked toward the stove. "Well, I'm starving. What's for dinner?"

"Broccoli," said Dad. Kevin frowned, but Dad smiled. "Just kidding. I made spaghetti."

-Teresa Ambord

**HOW ABOUT YOU?**

Have you heard gossip about someone you didn't like? It can be tempting to believe bad things about somebody else, even without proof. But even if it is true, remember that the only person who ever lived a perfect life without mistakes was Jesus. He forgave us, and we can show the same forgiveness to others.