

A Woman's Place Ministries
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Finally! That book I've been writing is finished! I thank and praise the Lord for that, because many were the times I felt like giving up. But God is faithful, and when He wants a job done, as long as we are willing, He will use us to carry out His plans. Praise our Jesus!

Later this month I will be ministering at The Solid Rock UPC in Enterprise, Alabama. 17-21, Richard West pastor. We would love to have you join us if you are in the area and are free. We look forward to much healing taking place.

Many people do not heal because of unforgiveness. Jesus said we must forgive from our hearts. This month I would like to talk about forgiveness, because it is vital to healing. The following is an excerpt from my latest book, APOSTOLIC COUNSELING. For those who are interested, it can be ordered off the website, or send for your own autographed copy-- \$8.99 plus \$1.13 postage to me personally, P.O. Box 751 ~ Beatrice NE 68310.

Forgive From The Heart

How do you forgive from the heart? First, we have to acknowledge the hurt and the hate. This is the great spiritual cover-up. Let God bring the pain to the surface so He can deal with it. Let him bring it out of the darkness of your soul where it has been hiding. In the light is where the healing takes place.

Satan uses unforgiveness. He will put us into bondage with it. Glen Strecker elaborates: "Quite often these days, this type of bondage is perpetrated on children, who don't know any better. Satan then uses these hurts and abuses, suffered at a tender age, to keep us imprisoned for the rest of our lives." That is why we need to get these issues out of the darkness. Once they are out, and into the light, we can be set free. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

But What If I Can't Forget?

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Hebrews 10:17

A stumbling block to many people is thinking that forgiving means forgetting; but that is not necessarily true. God did not wipe out our minds, and make everything go blank. Many people who try to forget find they cannot; consequently, they believe they have not forgiven. God says He will "remember no more" our sins (Hebrews 10:17), but God, being omniscient, cannot really "forget." What He is saying here is that God will never use the past against us (Psalm 103:12). Forgetting may be a blessed result of forgiveness, but it is not the requirement of forgiveness. When we bring up the past and use it against others, we can know in our hearts that we have not forgiven them.

I had a client who had been sexually abused by her father for many years. She grew up, married, and began making her own life. Her husband was killed in an automobile accident

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while she was four months pregnant. Due to all the circumstances, she was forced to move back home, at least until the birth of her baby. During those final weeks, the memories about her father began to come back. She had been so sure she had forgiven him and that her forgiveness had been complete. When she contacted me, I asked some questions to help her determine the extent of her forgiveness. It appeared to be complete. She harbored no hard feelings toward her dad. She prayed for him daily out of a heart that really cared. She wished only good things for her dad. Yet she found she had not forgotten what had happened. The enemy of her soul was beginning to use this against her.

After much prayer and time in the Word, God gave her the peace she needed. Although she still remembered a lot of what had happened, she did not feel like a "victim." She did not feel that old deep hurt. When she remembered, it was with knowledge only and not with a wounded heart. As she began to grasp this, she was able to move on with her life. People who fail to understand this may allow the devil to undo all the forgiveness that has been accomplished.

Forgiveness is a choice, a decision. We choose to face the hurt and the hate in order to forgive. Forgiveness can be very difficult because it goes against everything we believe about fairness and justice. We want revenge. "Why should I let him off the hook?" Because God demands it. God demands that we leave the offender, the abuser, in His hands. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Hebrews 10:31. The very fact that God demands us to forgive is because He knows there will be reasons to forgive. God is acknowledging that we have been wronged. If not, there would be no call to forgive. He is acknowledging that the hurt is real. Therefore, knowing that, we can more readily let go of it. How will we practice forgiveness if there is never anything to forgive?

If you don't let offenders off your hook, you are hooked to them and the past, and that just means continued pain for you. Stop the pain; let it go. You don't forgive someone merely for their sake; you do it for your own sake so you can be free. Your need to forgive isn't an issue between you and the offender; it's between you and your God.

God bless you,
Your friend,
Lynda Allison Doty

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