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Understanding Forgiveness

I used to call myself the “King of Brushing Off the Dust”. What I meant by that was, I would fall over and over so many times that I learned how to get back up too, and brush off my past. I, with all my struggles, had a hard time letting go of my past mistakes. Even though I wanted to move forward into my relationship with God, I would find myself unwilling to, because I couldn’t let go of some of my failures. I would catch my mind reliving each mistake over and over again. My mind would tell me that I was useless to God and until I changed He didn’t want me. It seemed that I was chained to my past experiences and something would not release me. I really wanted to move forward but I needed help.

I want to share with you the main revelation that set me free from all my past failures and allowed me to spend time with God, even while I was overcoming things. It all began with Jesus causing a little trouble with the Pharisees who were upset because right in front of everyone He had just told the paralytic man that his sins were forgiven. The Pharisees were ready to kill Jesus because they didn’t know what else to do with Him. Only God could forgive sins, so they began to accuse Jesus as being both blasphemous and crazy for His statement. Yet, to prove His point that He could forgive sins, Jesus went ahead and healed that man.

Until the point of Jesus walking on this earth, God was very clear on how to have your sins forgiven. Every year you and your family would take a perfect little lamb to the High Priest at the temple and ask him to sacrifice that lamb in place of your sins for that year. That lamb’s job was to take your place of punishment before God. That little innocent lamb’s blood would be shed to cover your sins until you came back the following year.

So you can imagine the outrage these High Priests had when they saw Jesus walking around forgiving everyone of their sins. He bypassed the High Priests, and their rituals, and forgave the people of their sins. Forgiveness is being released from the burden of your past mistakes. Jesus was able to act as the Lamb of God and release them from the burden of their past. The Lamb of God was taking the full responsibility for their sins and placing it on Himself.

Guilt bound me to the burden of past failure and I wanted to be free. I thought I needed some kind of special service or a prayer of deliverance but what I really needed was a revelation of God’s love for me. When I discovered how much my Heavenly Father loves me, and how much He wants me to succeed, I was set free from my past. And even though we should always learn from our past mistakes, we must also learn that it is okay for us to leave those mistakes behind, and to move forward into victory.

Isaiah 54:8-10 tells us about what God did for us concerning our relationship with Him and with our past. *“With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you, “Says the LORD, your Redeemer. “For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn That the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, So have I sworn That I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you. Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed.”*

God has a relationship of peace with you, and nothing you can do will destroy that covenant. The devil will do his best to get you to walk away from God but God will never walk away from you. How wonderful to

have someone who will never leave you. Jesus experienced the feeling of abandonment when He was most vulnerable.

Matthew 27:46 reads, *"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'"* Here at the moment when Jesus needed His best friend, His Father, the most is when God turned and looked away from Him. When God turned and looked away from Jesus it was so that He would never have to turn and look away from you. So no matter how ugly your past was, you have a Father who will never be angry with you. You have a Father who not only wants you to succeed; He has made a way for you to succeed. You have been freed from the burden of your past mistakes.

"What if I fail again?" is the next question that comes to our minds. Why should I expect God to forgive me if there is a good chance that I will fall again? Always remember that you have a Father who loves you and He will never give up on you. He wanted to fellowship with you so much that He made it possible to be close to Him as if you were perfect, before you were perfect. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess". If you fall a thousand times, He is there. Simply ask for forgiveness and trust that in His eyes you are already perfect. Learn from your past mistakes but also let go of them because God has.

When your emotions rise up and build reasons why God will never be able to use you again. When people around you argue that you have no right to move forward. When the devil tells you that you are blasphemous and crazy for believing that God loves you. In those times, remind yourself that Jesus has already taken the burden of your past away from you. You don't need anyone's approval to move on with your life, you already have your Father's approval.

Don't waste another moment letting your past dictate your future. Even if your past mistake was only a few moments ago, you will find God's grace is waiting for you right now. You are only a step away from His grace, His mercy and His forgiveness; simply ask and then don't look back.

Jesus didn't come to only be your Savior; He also came to be your Lamb. He came and took every bit of shame of failing, every bit of condemnation for hurting others, and every bit of judgment for sin so that you don't have to. He has already taken your place so let's stop living in the past and let's move forward into victory.

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