

Two forms of Forgiveness

I was thinking about the comment you made about the healing process starting with asking for forgiveness. This is true for many but I also was thinking that I was not aware of my part in the process until I was able to talk about the pain that was caused by family interactions very hurtful ways and ask for prayer and in a process of healing over time where others cared for me. Then I was able to forgive them and then I could see my part in it.

In leaning about forgiveness, I discovered that it has two definitions, one was to overlook and offense, - this is when it is not a big deal and you can act like it did not happen or not let it affect you.

The other definition is to forgive a debt. The process for forgiving my parents and those in authority who were not able to meet the needs that God meant for them to meet (shepherding, nurturing, teaching, love) was more like forgiving a debt. This involved grieving with

- Denial - Thinking it does not affect me or is not that bad. Can be total or just minimizing the event or the effect of the event.
- Anger -often comes out at God, is vented to a different person, or is internalized. Need to find healthy ways to see and deal with the primary emotion.
- Bargaining - Questions like what if they or I had been better or done more. Feelings of betrayal or not being good enough, questioning if I am loved?
- Depression -Lack of energy, either little motivation or over busy, decreased interest sadness, unresolved tears or anger
- Acceptance -Able to perceive the event or relationship with little or no pain and put it behind. New hopes, goals, dreams, purpose and energy give us a new perspective that affects events and relationships

A lot of this has to do with the connections that we are created for - Loving God and loving others

Anyway the reason I share this because there were three situations I had some major forgiveness and healing God wanted me to do. In one situation someone told me that I had not forgiven because I still talked about it. In that case I stopped talking about it and buried the pain. When another major loss happened and I was experiencing a lot of pain. God led me to watching a video speaker addressing grief. The confusion of my emotions was clarified and I realized that I was not crazy, but was going through a process of grief. The things I was feeling were normal and God's plan was that personal emotional and spiritual growth of becoming closer to others was, being worked out through this situation. I also saw that the previous situation needed some grieving, even though no one had died in them, I had lost some major dreams and relationships. In the third situation there were a lot of false accusations, loss of a major role and the impact of past relationships that I had had to separate myself from came to light. A quick "it did not affect me - saying forgiveness but not feeling it" had only made things harder in the past. This sharing and grieving with someone else allowed me to go back to some of the other relationships and not interact with people out of the pain, but to interact out of more wholeness and healing. That then affected those relationships more positively.

In turn, I could access hope for present and future relationships and could move forward with them at a deeper level. Not processing the forgiveness and grief of the earlier losses, would leave me stuck. The deeper level of forgiveness had a very positive effect.

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