

Combating the Enemy's Plan to Choke the Life Out of You

Life is made of shadows and light. If we didn't have shadows, we wouldn't know what light is. Light dispels shadows for sure. However, the converse is also true.

Shadows can dispel light. When the Light fades and becomes less in our life, shadows become more pronounced.

Until one day, the shadows have taken over and all we see in darkness.

Just one drop of the Light begins to dispel that darkness. If we take all the barriers away, the walls behind which shadows fall, the Light will completely flood our life again.

Fears

The walls and barriers can be comprised of anything, but their foundation is always the same—fear.

The little girl cowering in the corner of the attic in fear of what an emotionally ill parent will do next.

The child being used by an older boy for games that arouse him, but leave her feeling only shame and guilt for something she didn't do and wasn't her fault.

The pre-adolescent girl staying far away from a trusted family friend everyone loves and yet he “loves” her so much she is afraid.

The teenager fearing the crazy young man who stalks her even at her work place and charms her mother so she must hide out at a friend's house.

The married woman protecting herself from supposedly “godly”

men with straying eyes and looks of evil intent.

The mother afraid of losing her first-born due to her lack of caring for her body during pregnancy

The middle-aged woman losing both her mother and grandmother within six months of each other, leaving her the oldest matriarch to carry on family traditions.

The woman finally realizing she could lose her life if she does not get a handle on her addiction, even if it is “just” food.

Walls

Each difficulty adds walls that have cast fearful shadows on my life, for each of these situations happened to me.

Your shadows may be cast from different events that add barriers in your life.

Each dark moment is connected to a person or circumstance. Each one needs forgiveness, even if the person being forgiven couldn't help what happened, or even if they could help what happened.

My mother and grandmother died when I was an adult. This is a normal life process but, I had to forgive them for leaving me bereft of knowing how to fill their shoes.

A family friend molested me as a child right in the sanctuary of my grandmother's house. If I wanted to go forward with life I had to forgive him as well. It didn't matter that it happened years earlier. Those emotions cast shadows on my life that governed me until I willfully chose to forgive him.

It doesn't matter if the person is living or already deceased. The emotions of a child still remember what happened and still, in many ways, govern how we do life, until we forgive.

Forgiveness knows no bond of time, place or disposition as to the life or death of the person being forgiven.

There are things for which I had to forgive myself. There were things for which I had to forgive others. These were things I had to remove in order for the light to flood my life once again and help me breathe once again.

Choking

Without forgiveness, shadows will choke the life out of me and you.

The woman's husband leaves her. She loses her job. Her children fall in with the wrong crowd. Illness threatens to take her life or that of a child or spouse.

Death, divorce, debt, deceit, disaster, disease, depression, despair—the list of difficulties¹ never seem to stop.

We would live in the shadows of our circumstances if not for the Light of the World² available to bring goodness, hope, purpose and life abundant.³

I can live afraid of the shadows or I can release them through forgiveness. I can stop clutching them to my chest as if I can't live without them. In reality, I can't live, really truly live, with them.

Clinging to Jesus

It is only when I release the shadows that I can grab Jesus tightly with both hands, clinging to Him and never letting go.

Jesus is always holding on to me. Through the darkest times of my life, He has consistently, lovingly, patiently guided me, nudged me back on the path.

No matter what shadows cross my path, He is the light that

dispels them completely. I have decided. I have reached up and grabbed hold of Him. I will never let Him go.

“Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.’”²

Action Step

Write down every shadowy difficulty in your life that you can't seem to forget about, those that may still plague you and those you have tried to stuff into a closet somewhere trying to forget. Now take that paper you wrote them and and tear it into tiny pieces. Then throw them away or better still, burn them. As you tear up these difficulties or as you watch the smoke rise into the sky, release them to Jesus.

Ask Him, “Jesus, what do you give me in exchange for all of these difficulties?” Write down what He says. Write it where you will see and remember it. This is a present word for you to use, a direction for your life.

¹ John 16:33

² John 8:12

³ John 10:10

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