

Faith-Filled Insights to Prevent Your Crises From Turning to Tragedy

Tears flowed.

The eulogy for this young man evoked sobs that echoed throughout the room. When a young man dies unexpectedly, shock brings unspeakable sorrow.

He and my son Joe grew up together and remained close friends. My Joe has been in the glory of heaven since 2002, and now his close friend joins him to share in the unimaginable paradise.

They both played football; they both did mischievous things; they both had a contagious passion for life. And they both guaranteed their life eternal as they each invited Christ to be their Savior.

Although as I write this, they are both in heaven with joy overflowing, the family still on earth wonders what to do with the tragedy that barged in.

And that's understandable. All crises rattle our senses. All unexpected heartache changes the course of life. But all crises don't need to be tragedies.

5 Insights That Prevent Crises From Turning to Tragedy

1. Triumph comes when we choose to be victors rather than victims.
2. Blame gives power to pain.
3. Resentment repeats the aching of the wound.
4. Unforgiveness is the chain that keeps us bound.
5. Forgiveness is the choice that sets us free.

I embraced these insights in 2002 when my youngest son was

murdered. The act was senseless. The heartache deep. The change unbearable. But the freedom real.

The freedom that filled that first Christmas after losing our son came in a gift box called forgiveness.

My husband and I made that decision.

What prompted us was an honest desire to obey God. This passage in Matthew 18 spoke to us personally:

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle the accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But since he was not able to pay, his master ordered that he be sold with his wife, their children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

“So the servant fell on his knees, pleading with him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

“But that same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe.’

“So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and entreated him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’

“But he would not and went and threw him in prison until he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what took place, they were very sorry and went and told their master all that had taken place.

“Then his master, after he had summoned him, said to him, ‘O you wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had pity on you?’ His master

was angry and delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt.

“So also My heavenly Father will do to each of you, if from your heart you do not forgive your brother for his trespasses” (Matt. 18:23-35).

Let's Pray

Father, I need the wisdom to keep forgiving. To keep remembering what you first forgave in me. To keep receiving your grace to forgive the unforgivable. In Jesus' name, amen.

- What wound or heartache have you suffered?
- How will you resolve the pride that keeps you from forgiving?
- Are you living in the freedom of forgiveness? {eoa}

Janet Perez Eckles *is an international speaker and the author of four books. She has helped thousands conquer fear and bring back joy.*

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