

Forgiving Ourselves

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. —1 John 1:9

It is one thing to have this breakthrough regarding others—totally forgiving them and destroying the record of their wrongs; it is quite another to experience the greater breakthrough—total forgiveness of ourselves.

So many Christians say, “I can forgive others, but how can I ever forget what I have done? I know God forgives me, but I can’t forgive myself.”

We may wake up each day with the awareness of past mistakes and failures—and fervently wish that we could turn the clock back and start all over. We may have feelings of guilt—or pseudo-guilt, if our sins have been placed under the blood of Christ. But the enemy, the devil, loves to move in and take advantage of our thoughts. That is why forgiving ourselves is as important as forgiving an enemy.

Forgiving yourself may bring about the breakthrough you have been looking for. It could set you free in ways you have never before experienced. This is because we have been afraid to forgive ourselves. We cling to fear as if it were a thing of value. The truth is, this kind of fear is no friend, but rather a fierce enemy. The very breath of Satan is behind the fear of forgiving ourselves.

If we feel guilty, blame ourselves, and find that we cannot function normally—even though we have confessed our sins to God—it indicates that we haven’t yet totally forgiven ourselves. It means that we are still hanging on to guilt that God has washed away; we are refusing to enjoy what God has freely given us. First John 1:9 either is true or it isn’t. If we have confessed our sins, we must take this promise with

both hands and forgive ourselves—which is precisely what God wants us to do.

Excerpted from *Total Forgiveness* (Charisma House, 2002).