

How to Cope With the Past

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. **—Psalm 129:1-2**

When it comes to our past, God knows everything. God wants to bring us to the place where we can be ourselves. We do not have to pretend, because God knows us. We also know that He has forgiven us. What is certain is that we must not let past failure or our lack of spiritual progress immobilize us.

This psalm is a reminder that some have a past full of hurts. Perhaps that describes you. If that is the case, remember two things: in the Christian family there will be fellow believers who have suffered in a way similar to you, who can sympathize with you; best of all, Jesus will sympathize with you.

There are some people who have such a keen sense of rejection that they just can't handle a situation where someone tries to love them. They believe somehow it won't be true.

But even though you have known rejection and hurt or have damaged emotions, these experiences will not save you. You may think that because of these experiences you deserve a special break and somehow God will let you into heaven. But He will not.

A lot of people, if they have had some kind of hurt, have not received the victory over their attitude toward the problem. Instead they let the situation have the victory over them.

We must deal with the anger and bitterness toward those who caused the hurt or toward God for allowing it. If we do, God grants us a sweetness of spirit that will lead us actually to pray for those who caused the hurt.

Let me tell you how to cope with your past. It is not to say,

“This is the way I am”; it is to say with the psalmist, “But they have not gained the victory.”

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