

Showing God's Love When You're Mad at Your Ex

A few weeks ago, I posted about being done. These past several weeks have been a bit difficult with regard to my attitude about my ex-husband.

I forgave him three years ago, but sometimes I still get annoyed with him. Sometimes I just want him to be nice. And sometimes I want him to just go away already!

I've been pondering the whole response to an ex that ain't perfect. And I'm acknowledging right here and now that neither am I. Sometimes he just seems a lot less perfect than me. But then again, I know that isn't exactly accurate either. I have my own issues, and only by the grace of God do I live.

And although at this time in my life I'm writing as it relates to my ex-husband, I believe that God is showing me this is the way I'm to live, period: in an attitude of love, goodness, blessing and prayer. My eyes focused not on my life, not on my circumstances, and not on the wrongs done to me, but rather focused with laser intensity on Jesus!

The verse that God is continually bringing me to is Luke 6:27-28:

"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

It seems harsh to refer to my ex-husband as my enemy ... although sometimes it feels that way. I believe that he isn't my enemy. I think I feel like I'm in a battle with him, but maybe we are more like opponents in a tennis match—but there's definitely no love in the score.

"Love your enemies."

Awww, Lord. Really?

"Love ... do good ... bless ... pray."

Love him? Love him. Really?

What does that even look like? 'Cause I did that for a long time and it didn't end so well. So I'm praying as I write because I really don't know what that looks like.

Talking about love always reminds me of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Love is:

Patient, kind, does not envy or boast, is not arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful, does not rejoice in wrongdoing, rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

OK, I'm seriously convicted.

Am I patient with God's dealing with my situation and my ex? Am I kind in the face of my ex's attitudes, accusations and actions? Am I rude when I could choose to be kind? Do I insist that things go my way regardless of God's plan? Am I irritable and resentful? (Ugh. Definitely.) I do not believe I rejoice in my ex's wrongdoings, but maybe I do a bit when it's me trying to justify my angry response to him. Do I rejoice in the truth? Golly, I hope so.

But in this circumstance, do I bear, believe, hope and endure all things? Nope. I wanna crawl in my closet and hide. And when that doesn't happen, I want to yell and argue and fight with my ex.

Who am I kidding—I can't do those things! Love like that? That's not logical.

But when has God called me to do something that He hasn't enabled me to do? Seriously never!

Once again, I'm gonna have to rely solely on Jesus. After all, He has given us "a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7).

And I'm totally going to need that spirit in my life, because not only am I called to love that man, but to do good, bless and pray for him.

Do good too? Bless him?! Pray for him ... OK, I can do that.

I checked out Matthew 5:43-48 in The Message. (That Bible phone app rocks!) It reads:

"You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worse. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves.

"This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. ...

"In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."

Well, that kinda puts it all in perspective. Let them bring out the best in you. Respond with the energies of prayer. Respond with prayer to someone who is a pain.

God keeps reminding me of that prayer thing. It *is* the only answer. I believe maybe I need to be putting my energies into

prayer rather than thinking about how angry I am or even figuring out how not to be angry. And praying will certainly help me be my best—my God-created best. And that will definitely help me live generously and graciously toward my ex-husband.

I believe I will pray for God to enable me to live the way God lives toward me!

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