

This Bitter Seed Seeks to Obliterate Your Happiness

Recently I had a class reunion coming up. I was excited for the event, and I had fun preparing. I bought a really cute outfit, new shoes and great accessories, complete with a trip to the salon for my hair, nails and a pedicure. I have to admit, I was really excited to go. Going back was going home, and I enjoyed seeing my old friends.

There was one particular friend I was a bit nervous about seeing. We had been estranged for years, and I didn't know how she would react to seeing me. We had been good friends throughout school, but we had a dispute after school. Words were said, feelings were compromised and a friendship was destroyed. It's funny how we never feel like we are at fault, and at first, this was one of those times. There were some hurtful comments made on her part, but looking back, I know I said a few things as well. Years after the conflict, I wrote her a letter; I took a position of humility and asked her to forgive me for hurting her. I never heard back from her.

I walked into the reunion, and sure enough, she was the first person I saw. As the night went on, I thought it would be nice to just ask how she had been. To my shock and dismay, when I reached out, she jerked her head around and glared at me, responding rather abruptly. As I walked away, I realized that my writing the letter years ago had freed my heart from the poison of unforgiveness. I was not being held captive, but she still was. I felt sorry for her. My heart was grieved, but I learned a tremendous lesson on the importance of forgiveness.

As we forgive, we are purified from the defilement that unforgiveness produces. Bitterness is birthed out of a heart that is unwilling to forgive, and the consequence of that bitterness is our own condemnation. It becomes a poison that

pollutes everything you do and everything you are. Refuse to be swallowed up in your own bitterness; it is a pool of misery in which you will certainly drown. If you do not forgive, you will live a lifetime of regret. Take a moment right now and think of anyone with whom you might be angry. Do you want to live the most gratifying, fruitful life for the Lord? If so, then go ahead and decide in your heart to release anyone who has let you down or failed you in any way. Just release them. God drops the charges against us as we drop the charges against others. We are forgiven, but we must also forgive.

When you hold a grudge against another person, you will most likely be so wrapped up in that wrong of the past that you cannot enjoy your present. Forgiveness is the birthplace of your personal freedom: embrace it, walk in it and live it. Your days will be much brighter.

Refusing forgiveness can lead to depression, anxiety, bitterness, resentment and hostility. Unforgiveness causes you to cut out important relationships in your life. Just look at the life of Joseph. His brothers could have gained significant benefits all throughout their lives by having such a wise and dynamic leader as a brother. Instead they chose the path of hatred, guilt and shame. Joseph was propelled into his destiny through the hatred and jealousy of his brothers; God had a plan, and it was a good plan.

Joseph, because he was willing to forgive, was propelled into his destiny and was freed from the pains of his past. He was freed from all the hurt, all the rejection and all the anger that he must have experienced as a young man.

Forgiveness is command and a blessing from the Lord. It will free you from negative emotions and the hold others have over you. It will break the ties with a traumatic situation. It will allow you to feel joy again. It will restore your fellowship with God. Forgive because you have been forgiven. Forgive because it better reflects Jesus Christ in you.

Forgive because it opens your heart to fellowship with God. Forgive because it frees you from being tied to the pains of the past.

Unforgiveness, on the other hand, produces in us a seed of bitterness, and that seed can destroy us. It can steal our happiness and contentment in life. When we choose to forgive—and it is a choice—we no longer hold that poison inside of our bodies or souls. We are purified and released when we choose to forgive. Release your offenders and walk on the path to freedom and wholeness, letting go of the offense.
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