

Find New Life in the Power of Forgiveness

What does it mean to forgive, and what are the consequences of refusing to do so? David Peterson is a Spirit-filled ordained pastor and board-certified chaplain with over 30 years of experience in ministry to congregations and chaplaincy. He wrote "Journey to Forgiveness" to help people overcome trauma, find freedom from unforgiveness and walk in healing.

Peterson has an essential tremor, which is a neurological issue of the brain. It sends tremor impulses out through your hands and arms, sometimes into the voice or head. Over the years, the condition has been the cause of embarrassment., trauma and resentment. When he was in school, other students jokingly referred to his condition as DTs, or people would see his tremors and think he was being fearful or cold. He was bullied and misunderstood. When he was 12, he was also targeted by a pedophile who provided affirmation, alcohol and pornography. In other words, he knows the journey of forgiveness toward others.

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By the time he was 35 and married with children, he found himself being short-tempered, angry and hurting. He found that he was using the power and energy of his anger, and it was taking over his life. He also put up shields between himself and others to insulate himself from getting hurt. He went to his mentor, who advised him the enemy tries to plant thoughts to give us to an illegitimate source of anger energy.

Peterson's mentor encouraged him to voice a bold declaration: "I release you from my wrath." Vengeance belongs to the Lord, and when we turn it over and allow Him to deal with our

issues, “it’s not saying that what happened to us was right, that you have reconciled or that you’ll be completely healed in any way,” Peterson explains. “It’s a first step.”

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If you’re struggling with forgiveness, he encourages you to first forgive any pastors or counselors who simply said to move on. In forgiveness, there’s much more going on than we used to realize. Science has discovered there are such influences as biochemistry, life habits and perceptions to deal with. It’s complicated.

So, do you forgive and forget? No, he says. Once you make your declaration and release your anger, you’re pointed in the direction of healing and wholeness. And in some cases, reconciling is the last thing that needs to happen.

If you’re a child of God and are being abused, it’s very real. Acknowledge that you’re made in God’s image and you’re a real person. God will breathe life into you and strengthen you. You can overcome trauma and walk in healing with Christ.

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Marilyn Hickey founded Marilyn Hickey Ministries more than 45 years ago with God’s vision to cover the earth with the Word. Marilyn co-hosts a daily television program, “Today with Marilyn & Sarah,” reaching a potential viewing audience of over 2 billion households worldwide. Marilyn communicates deep biblical truths in a way that is understandable and practical for everyday life.

Sarah Bowling is on a mission to connect everyone with the heart of God while loving those who are overlooked, excluded and ignored. Led by Holy Spirit and anchored in the Word,

Sarah seeks to inspire all to know the unconditional and transformational love of God in our daily lives. A Bible teacher, author, international speaker and global humanitarian, Sarah also co-hosts a daily television program, "Today with Marilyn & Sarah."