

Forgiveness

The Bible contains many Scriptures that say we are to forgive those who have hurt us. But, nowhere in the Bible does it state, “Forgive & forget. Let abusive people continue to abuse you with zero consequences!” I believe that forgiving & forgetting is a stupid thing to do when a person shows no remorse for their actions! If you forgive & forget what they did to you, you open the door for them to abuse you over & over.

A good friend & I discussed it some time ago. She showed me what forgiveness really means, & this “forgive & forget” thing people preach isn’t it.

If you forgive someone, it means they no longer owe you a debt. For example, if you lend someone \$1,000, but they can’t repay it, you can forgive their debt to you by telling them they no longer need to repay you that money. You act as if they never borrowed that money, & you don’t discuss it again. However, you may decide never to lend them money again since they didn’t repay you.

If someone hurts or abuses you, they should “repay” you by apologizing & making things right whenever possible. Of course, chances are slim that will happen if you’re dealing with a narcissist.

This situation leaves you with 2 choices- wait for that apology indefinitely or forgive them of owing you that apology. Personally, I’ve decided to forgive, & quickly.

The Bible says in Ephesians 4:26, “***Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down on your wrath,***”. Nowhere in this Scripture does it say anything about feeling all warm & fuzzy! I believe this Scripture means that you just need to release the need for that person to make it up to you for what they did, not that you won’t feel any more anger. Your emotions will catch up to that decision at some point once you decide to forgive.

I think there is also a common misconception about forgiveness that when you no longer feel anger, thinking about what happened won’t upset you any more. I really don’t believe that is the case.

As an example from my life, I don’t think or talk about my late mother in-law very often. She passed away in 2016 & prior to her death, I hadn’t spoken to her in 14 years. She was a covert narcissist. After 8 years of dealing with her awful behavior, I simply couldn’t take anymore, so I stepped out of her life.

Recently, she came to mind. It’s a story I’ve written about before, so you may know it already. I remembered how once in 1999, my mother in-law wanted me to do something for her. I had an appointment the day she needed my help, so I told her I couldn’t do it. Although I probably could’ve moved things around to be available for her, I just didn’t want to. As soon as I said I wasn’t able to help her, my mother in-

law tried to find out why. She said snide comments & guilt trips to try to find out why I couldn't help. She said "You must have something to do for your parents, huh?" & "Well, what you have to do must be awful important if you can't take the time to help me out." Comments like that. I refused to tell her anything no matter what she did. Not only was it none of her business but she probably would've found some way to use the information I gave her to hurt or embarrass me at some future date. Besides, it amused me watching her get madder & madder at me, but unable to say or do anything about it without looking foolish.

Even though that happened many years ago, remembering this incident still angers me some. For a long time, I thought it must be a sign that I hadn't forgiven her. Now that I understand forgiveness though, I see that's definitely not the case.

Forgiving someone completely doesn't necessarily mean you never feel hurt or anger over the awful things they did. You can forgive someone completely, yet still feel some anger about the fact that they hurt or used you. It was wrong of them to do what they did, after all. Besides, if you didn't feel some anger or hurt, chances are you would ignore signs that show you are about to be used & hurt that same way again.

The next time someone tells you that you need to forgive & forget, or at least forgive, please remember this video.