

October 24, 2021

Forgive Yourself #1

by Ken Weliever

{Brother Ken has been doing a series on this subject, and I know this is something many people struggle with, so I will be publishing his series in the bulletin --DT}

In his book, *The Gift of Forgiveness*, Dr. Charles Stanley, tells a true story about a 16-year-old girl named Patsy who came to him confused and desperate.

When she was only 13 she became sexually involved with an 18-year-old boy. This relationship continued for two years until he moved to another state. Feeling "dirty and guilty," and distraught by his departure, she sought private counseling.

Sadly she became involved with the 30-year-old counselor on whom she had depended for help. Unable to talk to her parents about this she turned to Dr. Stanley.

"I know I'm saved, but I'm so full of guilt I don't know what in the world to do. And if somehow, I don't get an answer, I know I can't keep living," Patsy confided.

"Have you asked the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive you?" Stanley asked.

"I've asked him hundreds of times to forgive me," she responded.

"Well, has He?" She didn't answer.

"I just feel so dirty inside," Patsy continued to repeat.

While the details differ and may not seem as lurid, Patsy's plight is not a lot different than many Christians today

who find it difficult to forgive themselves for past sins.

In this four-part series, we want to ask and answer 4 questions: (1) Why we can't forgive ourselves? (2) The consequences of not forgiving ourselves. (3) How can we forgive ourselves (4) what happened when you do forgive yourself.

Why Can't We Forgive Ourselves?

(1) Because of a performance-based mentality.

Too many Christians feel like they must earn their salvation. It becomes works-focused instead of grace-focused. So when we sin, there's this cloud hanging over us that makes us feel we must do something to make up for our transgressions.

If we attend church services...If we pray enough prayers...If we give enough money...If we read the Bible enough...If we do enough good works...

But it's never enough.

The Bible says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8).

(2) Because we're too hard on ourselves.

A lack of self-worth says, "I'm no good." Like the refrain of the old-time hymn that says, "such a worm as I." Yet, the Psalmist pictures people as created

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Our meeting with Mike Walls has been cancelled since Mike tested positive for Covid.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

just “a little lower than the angels.” We’ve been “crowned with glory and honor.” And God has given “dominion” over His creation (Ps. 8).

When we’re disappointed in ourselves and become discouraged, distraught and depressed over our shortcomings, we beat ourselves up and feel like we’re finished. That we can never be forgiven.

Remember Peter, after denying Jesus 3 times was heartbroken. He “wept bitterly.” He was embarrassed. Ashamed. And remorseful. Yet, he picked up the pieces. Repented. Found forgiveness. And became a great apostle and preacher.

God knows that we are frail. Feeble. And fallible to sin. We are encouraged by this acknowledgment in Psalm 103:13-14.

As a father shows to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him.

For He knows our frame;

He remembers that we are dust.

(3) Because we’re continually reminded by other people.

Some people like to remind us of our shortcomings. Our mistakes. Our past sins. Like the wife who kept bringing up her husband’s past mistakes.

“Honey, you said you had forgotten that and forgiven me?”

“I have,” she said. “But I want you to remember that I have forgotten and forgiven you.”

Know anyone like that?

Unfortunately, you probably can’t make some people quit rehashing and reminding you of your past. You can’t control them. But you can control your thoughts. Your feelings. Your focus.

Be like the apostle Paul who said “forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).

Tomorrow {next week --DT} we will address the issue of failing to forgive yourself. In the meantime consider this quote by Mark Victor Hansen: “Lack of {self} forgiveness causes almost all of our self-sabotaging behavior.”

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson has improved some but still has limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing cancer treatments and is recovering from Covid.

Nancy Richardson is doing better but still dealing with breathing problems.

Karen Hallmark has improved but is still struggling with her health and her eyes, as well as asthma.

Dinah Williams is home but still has very limited mobility.

Don Simmons is home and recovering from Covid.

Sylvia Stinnett had knee surgery.

Jim and Judy Trammel have both come down with Covid.

Rachel’s grandmother passed away. Please keep her and the family in your prayers.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

*“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)*

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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