

Daily Devotional, March 8, 2021 Forgiveness

Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, “You aren’t one of his disciples too, are you?” He denied it, saying, “I am not.” One of the high priest’s servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, “Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?” Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow. John 18:25-27 (NIV)

Forgiveness is a great gift to us from God and it’s also a great gift when we receive forgiveness from others. Forgiveness gives us rest and relief from the burdens we carry and brings freedom to our spirits. Forgiveness can help us to start fresh. In our relationships with others, we can begin to build trust again, and find reconciliation. Sometimes we might have the hardest time forgiving ourselves. But when we forgive ourselves, we can find rest from the burdens we have carried and bring a new freedom to our life as well.

I think that Peter might have struggled with forgiving himself after Jesus was crucified. Peter was bold in his commitment to Christ and in the way he followed Him and learned from Him. But he also found himself quick to protect himself as well, in the darker moments of Jesus’ arrest. After Jesus was arrested, Peter was asked by many different people if he was one of the followers of Jesus. Three times he denied this, just as Jesus had predicted. When Jesus had told Peter this would happen, he couldn’t believe that he would ever be in a situation to do this, but he did. I can only imagine the guilt and pain that Peter felt about denying his Lord.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation, looking back on what you’ve done and feeling ashamed? You may have never intended to cause such pain or distrust. You know it’s not what you wanted to do, but in the moment, the choices were made – and now you are faced with the guilt of the situation. Forgiveness is needed from God, and from yourself. We cannot move on if we’re not ready to forgive ourselves.

God’s forgiveness is always available to us and God is constantly calling us into a deeper relationship with Him. Allow God to take your burdens, and even the guilt and shame you have been carrying. Forgive yourself as Christ has forgiven you. And just like Peter, you can experience the forgiveness of God and a new call on your life, to do important work, to share God’s love and forgiveness with others.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You that You are quick to forgive. Thank You, that You have removed our sins as far as the east is from the west. Right now, Lord, I ask for Your mercy and compassion, and I implore of You, the forgiveness that I need to find peace and rest in You. In Jesus’ name I pray Amen.