



A Story of Forgiveness

Testimony by Lucy Amina Chaves



When I was younger, I thought forgiveness was an easy thing, if someone did something wrong all they had to do was say “sorry” and that was the end of the story. As I grew older, I began to realize that forgiveness isn’t always so simple - it is a journey, one best walked with Christ. This lesson did not come easy.

A Painful Experience

I once had a very dear friend who was more like a sibling than a friend to me. But one day she started a rumor about me. The rumor was not only false; it was one of the most painful things I’ve ever experienced. In one moment I lost my bosom buddy as well as my reputation.

This also happened to be the time when I was preparing for my wedding. How was I going to do this without my dearest friend? I felt betrayed. How could the most joyous period of my life also be the worst?

Needless to say, things went sour very quickly, and the rumors kept spreading like a bad tumor. It is hard to explain how I felt, I just remember shaking with anger every time I saw my friend. I would feel the frustration and could barely speak. It was at this point that I knew forgiveness was hard; I was unable to forgive on my own.

A Prison of Pain

The situation lasted for about three years, and I kept hoping for an apology that wasn't to come. As much as I felt I was the one wronged, holding on to the pain was not making me healthy or happy. I felt stuck and unable to move beyond the point of pain, but at the same time I was convicted while praying the Lord's prayer specifically the part that says "forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." I remember asking the Lord to help me forgive, I couldn't do it on my own, I didn't know where to begin.

The Gift of Forgiveness

One day I reached out to my former friend in an attempt to reconcile. Things didn't go as I hoped - I didn't get an apology, but one thing was different, I felt the Lord lifting the burden from me.

Even though I was disappointed, it seemed like the anger was fading away. I felt stronger and more in control of my emotions. I walked away that day, not with what I wanted but with what I needed. My friend didn't apologize until years later but that day I felt like healing had begun, I felt

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-Matthew 18:27

strong enough to let go of my expectations, I felt strengthened by the Lord and slowly the weight of anger started to fall. Eventually I was able to give the Lord my expectation for an apology, and in exchange I received strength to choose joy even when things were not going my way.

I've realized that forgiveness is a gift from God. I've also learned that forgiveness is a gift for me. The decision to forgive healed me. I am not quite sure how it benefited my friend, but I know that the peace and healing within brought back joy and an abundance of strength to withstand hardships. Today I know for sure that forgiveness is a gift that actually benefits me the giver. By God's grace, I practice it quite frequently, I love reaping the benefits.