

PAINFUL MEMORIES SPLINTERS FROM THE CROSS

- Hurt
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Rejection
- Womanizing husband
- Adulterous husband
- Separation or divorce
- Sexual, physical, or verbal abuse
- Imperfect upbringing
- Divorce or marital separation of parents
- Absentee father or mother
- Womanizing father
- Alcoholic father
- Alcoholic mother
- Druggie mother
- Tyrant mother
- Prostitute mother
- Unloving mother
- Lazy slouch mother
- Foster child
- Unloved

What do you do when there's intense, persistent emotional pain in your life? You have suffered any one of these or all: hurt, neglect, abandonment, rejection, sexual, physical, or verbal abuse from a parent, relative, or total stranger. You perceive your upbringing as being entirely faulty, bungled, and grossly imperfect. There has been a divorce or no father at all, or there was an absentee father, a womanizer, an alcoholic, or an abuser; or an alcoholic mother or one on drugs, a mother who was a tyrant, unloving, or a lazy slouch. Perhaps you grew up in foster homes and ended up as a nonentity amongst a tribe of children whose lives were as abnormal as yours. You felt from the depths of your innermost being that you were not loved.

Following is an allegory describing an experience which can bring healing and a place of peace in your life. Perhaps you have cried out in desperation, "Jesus, I can't take this lonely road again. I've walked it so many times before yet it leads me nowhere. And when I get to the end of my emotions there is a void, an immense gulf of painfully cold blackness."

AN ALLEGORY

"Anna," He called softly.

"Yes, Lord?"

"How is it that you still don't trust Me?" His voice was warm and deep. "Lift your eyes to Mine." And with that He gently placed His hand beneath my chin and brought my face opposite His. Looking into His eyes I saw something I'd never seen before. There, a single tear swelled and spilled over His dark lashes and down His smooth olive skin. First one, then another. His heart was breaking for me. I lifted my hand to wipe the tears from His cheek, pausing to caress the precious face of my Jesus.

Then He took my hand gently into His own. I winced as my fingers touched the scar. He cupped His other hand over mine and with a pat of reassurance, in that same soothing voice, said, "Follow Me. There is nothing to fear." With that He let go of my hand and turned and walked away.

There before Him I saw that road just as I'd always seen it before. But this time, Jesus walked ahead of me. I knew I had to follow. The road was long and winding. It was narrow and rocky. The incline was sharp and steady. My feet were heavy and each step became harder to take. I slowed to a crawl, but Jesus kept His pace and soon was far ahead of me, out of sight.

It seemed as though hours had passed as I neared the end of the road. But my heart was full of anticipation. I knew my Lord would be waiting for me, arms opened wide, just around the next corner. I wouldn't have to face the void alone this time. Filthy, exhausted and out of breath I finally reached the end. As I rounded the last corner I couldn't believe my eyes. Shocked and horrified a cry of agony filled my lungs as I fell to my knees. "Noooooooooooooooooooo!"

There before me hung my precious Lord, once again nailed upon the tree. His skin hung in ribbons. Blood flowed freely down that smooth olive face as the thorns dug deep into His skull. There at the foot of the cross I wept, and once again I looked into His face. "Why?" I asked Him pleadingly. "Why are you doing this for me?" "You already died for my sins two thousand years ago. Why again?"

He pushed Himself up on the nail in His feet and gasped a reply I didn't expect. "The question, My child, is not why?, but what now? What will you do with Me now?"

"I don't know what You mean," I sobbed. "What choices do I have?" Then there appeared next to me a large bucket, filled with a lifetime of atrocities. The stench was sickening, more hideous than anything I'd ever experienced before. It was all I could do not to wretch at the sight of it. I looked again to the mutilated figure on the cross and, shaking my head, I pleaded, "I just don't understand."

Again He put all His weight on His feet and spoke in painful gasps. "Throw it on Me."

"No!" I screamed. "I can't! I don't understand, my Lord, please help me understand!" I continued frantically. "You've already taken my sins, why must You do it again?"

"These aren't your sins, My child, but the sins of the one who has hurt you."

"But You've already taken their sins too; why must You do this again?"

"My precious child," He spoke lovingly. "Each time you dwell upon the one who hurt you and refuse to release the hurt, you drive the nails into Me all over again. Until you let go of the past, until you forgive, I will hang here suspended in agony."

With that I grabbed the bucket and flung it as hard as I could away from my Savior into the void beyond the cross. Then I threw myself at the foot of that tree. There I clung with all my might, sobbing uncontrollably. “I forgive!” I cried. “I forgive.”

An angel came at that moment and released my precious Lord and the two of them soon disappeared from view. I released my painful grip of the cross and pulled myself to my feet. I looked at my own hands and forearms, and again I gazed in astonishment. There, deeply embedded in my hands and arms, were splinters from the cross. As I pulled each of the shards from my own flesh, the wounds immediately began to heal. Then, in a moment, the blackness of the void was overtaken by the glorious light of the Son of God.

I was free.



We don't need to live in the ugly past, dwell on it, cling to it. All we have to do is say, 'I forgive the one as well as everyone who might have hurt me, and I ask Your blessing on them.' Let Jesus sort out the details. Let Him be Savior and Lord! With the measure that we measure out to others is measured back to us.

Jesus is waiting.

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