

Day 3

Forgiving Betrayals

Day 3 Scriptures:

Prov 4:23

Heb 12:1-3

Mark 11:24-25

Matthew 18:21-35

Today's devotion follows a story of someone on the journey to forgive the betrayal of an absent father. Are you carrying the weight of a betrayal in your life? Today's devo is full of practical advice to help you forgive even the deepest of wounds.

My dad left my mom when she was five months pregnant with me. Growing up, I never thought much of it. It was just my mom and me, and I liked it that way. As the years went by, however, my frustration toward my missing father-son relationship grew.

Frustration toward my dad for bailing on my mom. Frustration toward my mom for not saving their relationship. Even frustration toward myself because the thought of having a son, me, couldn't make him stay. The anger grew. It became more irrational, more displaced, more outrageous. With every added thought of negativity, my father-son relationship baggage grew heavier.

Once the weight became too much to bear, I decided to meet my dad.

In just a few weeks, I had tracked him down and made dinner plans. The whole week leading up to it, I felt sick. Every anxious thought was rising up, along with every insecurity from my absent-father issues.

I walked through a crowded restaurant toward a face eerily similar to my own, and for the first time I looked my dad in the eyes. It was surprisingly normal.

The key moment soon arrived, and I told him, “I’m sorry for all these years of hating you.”

Quickly he replied, “I’m sorry for all the pain I caused you.”

Oddly enough, in that moment, all of the weight was lifted. I had a relationship with my dad. I had let go of the anger—but then the next morning came. I had gotten everything I wanted, but I couldn’t help but still feel angry toward him.

I learned that relieving the weight of past pain doesn’t happen all at once. You must learn to let go daily. Here’s how to let go:

1. **Identify what makes your baggage heavier.** Certain things will set you off. Instead of hitting panic mode whenever these emotions come back up, acknowledge them. Take a deep breath, slow down, and clearly identify what made you feel this way.

2. **Set boundaries.** Once you have identified the factors that replay the pain of the actions you’re trying to forgive, set boundaries. Some things will be too triggering for you. Set boundaries to guard your heart.

3. **Share your story.** After meeting my father, I was vocal to my friends about the emotional roller coaster I was riding. The majority of them also had an absent father, so they understood the pain. What I didn’t know was the change that was happening in them, too. Soon after I made the choice to meet my dad, three of my closest friends decided to do the same. Your story is powerful and inspiring. When you forgive and let go of your pain, share your story! You have no idea the impact you could make.

No matter what relationship needs healing, learn to let go. You just might find that your baggage is a little less heavy after all.

Today Ask Yourself:

What baggage are you carrying?

What broken relationship needs healing?

What painful circumstance are you holding too tightly?

Pray: *God, help me repair the broken relationships in my life. Help me learn to let go of past hurts and forgive others the same way You freely forgive us. Give me wisdom to know what boundaries to set and how to start. In Jesus' name, amen.*