

A publication of
Genuine Joy Ministries

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- God doesn't "abandon" any of His children.
- So God, our Father, doesn't leave us but we can choose to leave Him.
- Holding a grudge against someone, exacting revenge on that person is a classic example of unforgiveness.
- Forgive from the heart; let it go and feel God's peace and assurance that you are in the center of His will.

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

Dear Joy	1
References & Info	2
Fall Quote	3
Just for Fun	3

The Hard Questions

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Answers to Life's Hard Questions— Are You Ready?

Dear Joy,

You say you answer hard questions. Well, I have one for you. My mother-in-law doesn't like me and God has abandoned me; I don't know why. My mother-in-law said something about me to my wife that hurt me. All I want from her is an apology but she refuses. So now I refuse to see or talk to her and won't allow her in any family get-togethers. This upset my wife but since my mother-in-law has been so hateful toward me, don't you think I've got every right to keep her out of my life?

This is wrong on so many levels I'm not sure where to start. But let's start with your mother-in-law. First she is your wife's mother. Since your actions upset your wife I must assume they have a good mother/daughter relationship. If you don't have any compassion for your mother-in-law surely you must have some for your wife. Cutting her off from her mother is cruel and unusual punishment. That makes you a cruel person. Are you cruel?

Now about your relationship with God. Again I am assuming but since you say He's abandoned you then you must feel you once had a relationship with Him. I've got good news for you. God doesn't "abandon" any of His children. Jesus told us to call Him, "Our 'Father' and I know from personal experience that He's the best Father the world has ever known. He continuously gets a bad rap from the media and people in

general as He gets blamed for disasters, catastrophic weather—and some that's not catastrophic—and for just about anything bad that happens. Which strikes me as really weird since my Bible says, "Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." James 1: 16, 17. Good things always come from God. And even when disaster strikes, we hear a multitude of stories from real people—survivors—that tell about His presence with them in their time of crisis.



So God, our Father, doesn't leave us but we can choose to leave Him. And then, like those mentioned previously, we place the blame on God and accuse Him of abandoning us. I beseech you to examine your heart, your life and most of all your motives and see if this might be true in your case.

Finally, let's look at the revenge you decided to perpetrate on your mother-in-law and, it must be said, your wife and your family, by restricting your mother-in-law from family times together. I don't know why your mother-in-law chooses not to apologize to you. Perhaps she feels she did nothing wrong or she may have felt she had a good reason to say what she said. That, however, is beside the point. What she did or didn't do, good reason or bad, shouldn't concern you at all. The fact that you are exerting your control over your family members



Web Sites:[Get Some Hairapy!](#)[The Problem with Holding Grudges](#)[10 Keys to Forgiveness](#)[Forgiveness from a Christian Perspective](#)[Grudge](#)[Forgiveness](#)**Books:***Total Forgiveness - Revised & Updated by R.T. Kendall**Unpacking Forgiveness: Biblical Answers for Complex Questions and Deep Wounds by Chris Brauns*

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 2 Peter 1:3

does concern me. These are people who have a right to their own feelings, thoughts and actions. Believe me, a controller is an extremely difficult person to live with. And you, sir, are a controller.

God's Word in Romans 12:19 states: "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay.'" We are to "overcome evil with good." v. 21. And in Leviticus 19:18, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people..." If it's God's job to avenge you what then is your responsibility? I'll tell you and it's the solution to this entire dilemma and it's even easy. Although some might say it's easy to say but not so easy to do. What I'm referring to is forgiveness.

Please stay with me now. Holding a grudge against someone, exacting revenge on that person is a classic example of unforgiveness. Somewhere I read, "Holding a grudge against someone is like drinking poison and waiting for that person to die." Insane idea, isn't it? Holding a grudge is a form of insanity.

But you may say, "What she did was unforgivable." I'm so glad God doesn't say that to us. In Romans 5:8, it says, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners Christ died for us." You and I were both ungodly sinners at one time and Christ died for us. Even as He hung on the cross being jeered and heckled by the crowd of onlookers, He looked at them and said,

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34. Christ is forgiveness personified.

The interesting thing about forgiveness is that it is for the benefit of the forgiver and not so much for the forgiven. Unforgiveness wreaks spiritual, physical and emotional havoc. Spiritually, it separates you from God. See, Mark 11:25, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him/her, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you **your** sins." We're forgiven by God to the same degree we forgive others. We say this every time we recite the Lord's Prayer.

Physically, it drains our energy, lowers our immune system and can cause many illnesses, heart problems and cancer among them. I've provided some links in the Resources box that go into greater detail about the effects of unforgiveness on your body and your overall health.

Emotionally, when you're filled with anger and hate towards anyone, even if it's justified, it depresses you, causes erratic emotional reactions and causes people to avoid you since most sane people don't want to be around someone who is critical, moody and sometimes just plain mean.

I lifted the following from a blog because it goes right to the heart of the problem of unforgiveness:

"In refusing to forgive another we are not only damaging ourselves but we are assuming the God's position in another

person's life. The root of all unforgiveness is pride. Pride says 'that person owes me and I'm not letting go until they pay me.' Forgiveness says 'I release you into the hands of God. I forgive you and am moving on with my life.'" from observations of earth.blogspot.com

Forgiveness, on the other hand, leads to a healthier you. Many times we're reluctant to forgive because we feel it condones the actions we consider wrong that have been aimed our way. That is a lie straight out of hell. It doesn't condone anything. If that were the case then Jesus' forgiveness would mean He condones all sin. Wrong! It really means you make a conscious effort not to hold their action against them. This does two things. It releases you from bondage to them and releases you, as well, to go forth and live your life without the burden of bearing a grudge. You will feel freer, more creative, more like yourself and more in tune with God.

Forgiving someone does not mean to go to that person and say, "I forgive you." They may give you a curious look and wonder what they are being forgiven for. No, this should be between you and God and when you're truly determined to forgive another, it will free you and will be expressed through your actions from then on towards that individual. If your actions don't change, you haven't truly forgiven. My advice, therefore, to you: forgive from the heart; let it go and feel God's peace and assurance that you are in the center of His will.

HELPING YOU FIND GENUINE JOY!

Genuine Joy Ministries

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QUESTIONS????? Write us.

Sometimes you come up with really hard, tough questions that you don't have the answers to.

At times you're too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask your friends and family... and when you are brave enough to ask the questions, even they don't always have the answers.

You don't think you have anyone that you can talk to... well now you do.

Genuine Joy Ministries is dedicated to helping you find the answers to life's hardest questions.

Just For Fun

A blonde, wanting to earn some extra money, decided to hire herself out as a "handy-woman" and started canvassing a nearby well-to-do neighborhood.

She went to the front door of the first house, and asked the owner if he had any odd jobs for her to do. "Well, I guess I could use somebody to paint my porch," he said. How much will you charge me?" The blonde quickly responded, "How about \$50?" The man agreed and told her that the paint and everything she would need was in the garage.

The man's wife, hearing the conversation, said to her husband, "Does she realize that our porch goes all the way around the house?" He responded, "That's a bit cynical, isn't it? The wife replied, "You're right. I guess I'm starting to believe all those dumb blonde jokes we've been getting by e-mail lately."

A short time later, the blonde came to the door to collect her money. "You're finished already?" the husband asked. "Yes," the blonde replied, "and I had paint left over, so I gave it two coats." Impressed, the man reached into his pocket for the \$50.00 and handed it to her.

"And by the way," the blonde added, "it's not a Porsche, it's a Lexus."



To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover the prisoner was you.—Unknown

If you know someone who would be interested in or needs to see this newsletter, you can easily add their email address to our mailing list. Just send a quick email to: info@genuinejoyministries.org



THE HARD QUESTIONS — DO YOU HAVE ONE?