

Rambling Resentments

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Bitter discontent at being treated unfairly. We all experience it. People, circumstances and situations lingering deep within our hearts and minds. The result is a life robbed of peace and rest. Just when you think you have it conquered the feelings come rambling quickly to the surface.

Resentments create fear about our future; keeping us unfocused on the reality of God's promise to not harm us but to give us hope (Jeremiah 29:33). Day to day life becomes a constant battle to fight off angry or defensive responses to those who attempt to speak truth to us. The love of God is the only way out. Trusting His love remains the same provides strength and courage to keep moving forward. Resentments keep us stuck in the past; repeatedly reliving old memories rather than remembering with acceptance the fact they are a part of our life experience.

Moving forward requires a number of things from each of us. Here are some steps to consider:

1. Acknowledge the existence of resentment. I don't know of too many people who enjoy this step. However, it is absolutely necessary. We cannot move forward remaining in denial that resentments exist. This means we may temporarily feel worse before we feel better.
2. List all the people who have said or done something that is hurtful to you. Make sure you note what was done to whom. This may take some time and you will relive some of the emotions. Take this steps in small pieces.
3. Next...this is the hard part, write down how you contributed to the situation or offense. Maybe you were dishonest, withholding, or didn't speak up when you had the chance. No matter the offense, write your part down in black and white.
4. List the areas of your life that were affected and how because of the resentment.
5. Find a trusted friend or prayer partner to share each of the events with, praying over them asking God to forgive you for your part.
6. Last but not least, as the Lord directs, apologize for your part to the person listed (if possible) for your part in the situation. Remember to not insist they apologize. This is

about you walking towards freedom and away from bitterness. What they do or don't do is between them and the Lord.

Paul states in Acts 24: 16 that he works to have a clear conscience before God and before men. This is our pattern to follow. No one step can be successful unless we admit to ourselves the resentments that ramble around in our minds. It is the first step in moving away from the rambles into the rest God has promised us.

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