

The Freedom of Forgiveness

Mahatma Ghandi once said, "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong." Forgiveness is one of the most powerful attributes a person can possess. It can liberate someone from the confining walls of their darkness controlled mind. Pent up hatred and anger cannot advance one any further than the depressing space they are currently occupying. Only forgiveness and clemency can truly set a person free.

On December 14th, 2012 gunman Adam Lanza stormed the elementary school located in Newtown, Connecticut. He mercilessly took the lives of 20 children and 6 educators in the tragic shooting spree. The news completely ravaged the town and everyone who felt safe there. Most viewed this as an evil and unforgivable act of horror... but not Scarlett Lewis. Scarlett Lewis was the mother of six year old Jesse Lewis, who was one of the children killed in the massacre. She immediately forgave Adam Lanza and hoped that, "he is experiencing the same kind of love that the children are now, in heaven." This tremendous act of courage and dignity should serve as an example for anyone who is struggling on the path of forgiveness. If you do not forgive then you will likely spend the rest of your life caught up on the negatives of the situation. Scarlett could either spend eternity building up hatred towards Adam or she could forgive him. Once a person is able to forgive they are set free of the negatives and are able to focus on the positives. In the example of Scarlett Lewis, she can focus on remembering the joys that her beloved son brought her for the six years he touched her life.

A common misconception of forgiveness is that the person forgiving thinks that the act was okay. That is far from the truth. When forgiving, as Scarlett described, "cutting the cord to pain," you are acknowledging a deed that affected you was not okay. However you're moving

on, past the negatives of the situation, toward the positives. Everyone would rather focus on the positives instead of the negatives. Forgiveness provides a conduit to positivity.

Personal relationships can be severed and destroyed if a person does not have the capacity to forgive someone. Families and friendships are too often ripped apart because they refuse to forgive a person they called a brother or a sister or a friend. No matter how unacceptable the deed was, it is crucial to remember the positive times you have shared with that person. In doing this, one will realize how much value that relationship has and realize that it is better to have a positive relationship than a negative one.

Forgiveness is a crucial thing that everyone should be able to call upon. It will set you free and recover that strained relationship. By forgiving, one can abolish the negatives that have kept him or her in the dark and trapped, and move toward the positivity and freedom that forgiveness provides.

Reference

Zaimov, Stoyan. *Mother of Child Killed in Newtown Shooting: I Hope Adam Lanza Is Forgiven, in Heaven With Children*. Christian Post, 13 Dec. 2013. Web. 14 Nov. 2014.