

**Isaiah 65**

<sup>17</sup> For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

**Revelation 21**

<sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

<sup>5</sup>He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

*(All scriptures are from the King James Version)*



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**In Due Season  
Beauty Emerges  
From Darkness**



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### **Matthew 6:12-15**

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

<sup>14</sup> For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

<sup>15</sup> But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

### **Mark 11**

<sup>24</sup> Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

<sup>25</sup> And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

<sup>26</sup> But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

### **Luke 6**

<sup>36</sup> Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

<sup>37</sup> Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

<sup>38</sup> Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

### **2 Corinthians 2**

<sup>9</sup> For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

<sup>10</sup> To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

<sup>11</sup> Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

### **Coll. 3:13**

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

### **Romans 5**

<sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

<sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him.

That incident occurred over ten years ago. Joel has since grown into a mature, fun-loving young man always ready to help others and honor God in what he does. He wrote a paper for college about forgiveness and used his own example in it. This led to a discussion with a fellow classmate (a father) whose child was in need of inner healing. Joel says that during his adolescence, he was extra cautious around men he didn't know well but now feels his level of caution is more appropriate.



I am Joel's mother. I wrote about Joel because I care about anyone hurting like he once did. Each situation is unique, and I do not wish to give advice other than I hope parents in a similar dilemma will take great care in choosing a counselor for their child. I also hope that they be alert to any need to forgive the unforgivable, as this seems key to getting on with life.

Just as true love is a decision, not a feeling, so is forgiveness. In fact, true forgiveness is one of the greatest forms of love, regardless of one's faith.

In closing, I have provided Bible verses about forgiveness my family has found both practical and inspirational.



The eldest of four sons, Joel, at age nine, was a lanky, happy, energetic boy. That is, until traveling out of state with his family, when he had a short but inappropriate encounter with a 78-year-old man next door. The neighbor, unbeknownst to the vacationing family, was a pedophile on parole.

Thanks to a Disney educational video, *Too Smart for Strangers* featuring Winnie the Pooh and company, and frequent parental reinforcement that he and his brothers report any inappropriate behavior to them, Joel was quite willing to describe the situation to them and authorities as soon as he realized the man had a problem.

Nevertheless, Joel wasn't the same after this experience. Gone was the energetic bounce to his step and the sparkle in his eyes that earned him the affectionate nickname, Tigger. It was as though Joel were in some kind of emotional hibernation. He was depressed and hurt.

His mom felt the problem was that Joel was unable to forgive the man who emotionally hurt him. She carefully approached this subject of forgiveness on occasion when Joel seemed receptive to the subject.

Because they were a Christian family, the Bible was their basis for understanding what forgiveness is. However, the principle of forgiving others is universal regardless of one's faith.

Joel could not forgive until he was ready, and his mom never pushed him to do so. But she did what she could to help Joel understand what forgiveness meant. She had forgiven that man the day after the awful discovery about him. But she had years of practice at this already! Joel knew in his head that this was something he must do. But he also knew it would be meaningless if he could not forgive him from the heart.

He was very young to process the idea of forgiving an adult who hurt him. His mom was actually relieved that he did not rush into forgiving this man because that could have meant that Joel was doing it just to please her or God.

Being a nurse, she felt strongly that Joel see a highly recommended psychologist specializing in these cases. He willingly met with a psychologist several times over a two-month period. Then the visits ended. Nothing more could be done at this point.

In her final evaluation, the psychologist told his parents to beware of the teen years as this is typically when any hidden problems start to emerge. Sadly, the visits with her did not restore the characteristic bounce to Joel's step or that once familiar gleam in his eyes. The psychologist never discussed forgiveness with Joel.

The patient mom herself continued to counsel her son, explaining to him that the man didn't deserve forgiveness for what he had done. They did not need to come up with a rational explanation or excuse for his behavior. He had no excuse. But they needed to forgive him because God wanted them to forgive

others as he said to in the Lord's Prayer.

She recalls explaining, "We do not deserve God's forgiveness for our sins because we have all sinned and can not be perfect like He is. Yet God forgave us, even before we were born so that we may live forever with Him someday."

She also explained that forgiving him didn't mean that the man shouldn't be punished. On earth, some things must be punished even when we forgive.

She asked her son if he would mind if she checked on him occasionally to see if he was ready to forgive him and he agreed. She'd observe his behavior. When the opportunity seemed appropriate, she would just ask if he was ready yet. She would remind Joel that though forgiveness comes from the heart, it is not based on feelings but rather readiness & willingness, hoping he would eventually recognize when he was ready to do so.

One sunny spring morning, just four months after the incident and one month after the professional counseling ended, Joel flew down the stairs into the kitchen for breakfast. After exchanging greetings, his mother asked Joel if he had thought any more about forgiving his offender. Smiling, he replied, "I already did." She knew because his eyes were sparkling once again, and he was bouncing all over the house like Tigger.

Joel wrote a statement that he had forgiven this man. He put it in the family safe box as a reminder of his decision. So in due season, like a butterfly in a chrysalis, Joel emerged from his spiritual darkness, into the light, revealing a glowing confidence, liveliness, and inner joy and peace beyond expectation. His mom hoped God would use his experience to help others some day, believing He allowed it for a purpose.