

Dealing With Our Past

Some people struggle with memories of the past. Maybe there are people that come back in our dreams that we would rather not think about. When thinking about things in our past, we might be haunted by sins. Maybe we can't stop thinking about a person who hurt us. Maybe every time we see them, they ask us why we did such a terrible thing. Maybe they remind us of a sin we committed against them.

God says he forgets about our sins. In the book of Psalms it says, "He has removed our sins from us. He has removed them as far as the east is from the west." (Psalm 103:12 NIRV) God proclaimed all sin paid for when Jesus died and rose from the dead. Jesus rose from the dead to show us his victory over sin, death, and the devil. Our sins have been paid for. God no longer sees us in connection with our sin. Does anyone really know how far east is from west? That's God's way of telling us that our sins are so far removed that we don't have a way to describe the distance.

But, what about those individuals who might remind us of our past? How do we deal with the bad feelings we may have towards each other?

In those moments when there is hurt, shame, guilt, or blame, it is helpful to remember who the true enemy is. The true enemy is the devil – the father of lies and sin. The devil would love to keep you and your family or friends angry with each other. He would love to see bitterness and hate overcome love and forgiveness.

Where the devil tempts us to remain in shame, God proclaims our freedom in his forgiveness instead. God reminds us that – in the moments where a family or friend's unforgiveness may tempt us to feel shame and hate – we can turn to God for help and healing. Just like he has the power to forgive our sins, he can give us the strength to love those people who aren't quite ready to forgive us.

After all, what better way is there to thank God for his gift of forgiveness than to forgive someone else, right?

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, when our past sins haunt us, remind us that your Son won the victory over sin, death, and the devil. You have removed our sins from us. We are blessed and we give you thanks! Give us strength to honor you as we forgive others in our path each day. AMEN.