

## Healing Distress, Debt, And Discontent

Everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was in discontent gathered to him. So [David] became captain over them.

(1 Sam. 22:2 NKJV)

Do you ever wish you could erase moments of time in your life?

One evening, a group of my single friends met to celebrate Jerry's birthday. He was rather new to the group, but seemed to do OK on my mental checklist for credibility.

Eventually the conversation got around to Jerry's new venture. He shared all the details of how he had recently acquired a small business. We sat captivated while he explained how he was going to use proceeds from the business to help fund missionaries and their work around the world. But his plan, he said, would work much better with a little more operating capital.

When he gave us an opportunity to help, I thought, count me in. The others were also interested. Jerry could pile on the glamour and charisma as thick as the icing on his birthday cake!

Little did I realize that, suddenly, I had become like one of David's men---distressed, in debt, and discontent. My generous loan to Jerry was unsecured. Foolishly, I had turned over hard cash to him without receiving the written loan agreement he'd promised to draw up, and now the birthday boy filed bankruptcy.

Aren't a promise, a smile, and a handshake enough between friends? I thought. Apparently not.

However, even though I was angry and hurt, it was time to rise up out of the ashes of defeat and be restored.

The book of James says that if we are a doer of the Word, we will be blessed in what we do. Boy, did I need a blessing! So, in times like the one above, we should begin to implement these steps toward forgiveness:

1. Re-read Ephesians 4:31-5:2 (NIV).

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

2. Make a decision to get rid of all of it...

the anger, the bitterness, and the rage.

3. Remember how completely Christ forgave us.

Before we ever did anything right or anything wrong, Jesus laid down His life, took our punishment, and made forgiveness available to us.

4. Be an imitator of God.

There isn't anything Jesus hasn't already forgiven us of. Therefore, there isn't anything we can't forgive someone else of.

5. Put negative thoughts away.

When thoughts of that situation come back to visit us, we should remember that we've already forgiven that person and we are grateful to God who is restoring everything the devil has stolen.

6. Obey what Jesus said to do in Matthew 5:44 (KJV).

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

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## About the Author

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