

Breaking Free



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I am going on a journey into the physical acts of forgiveness in my healing walk. Of course, I have some real trepidation in opening those boxes; I have some tough work ahead and it's not for the faint of heart, but I also know that I am not going into it leaning on my own strength alone. Let me tell you my story.

I started journaling a few years ago. It has been an extremely valuable tool in helping me put pieces together to see the big picture and see how far I have come in my healing walk; I am astounded to reread my journal and trace the path from where I was to this very place where I am right now.

At the beginning of last year, I witnessed a traumatic suicide right in front of me, an experience that caused some pretty severe PTSD. God had already told me that it was time to move into the next place of healing and that it would involve working with a Christian counselor. I was told that this would be the place of my next breakthrough. Honestly, I would have probably put off finding a counselor

for "a while", but because of the events of that day, I was essentially forced to find a counselor immediately in order to get help with the anger I felt at having to be a witness to that event and everything that the event itself dredged up from my past. That's when I started working with a counselor at Genesis Institute.

Though the event was extremely painful, I was soon shown some of the reasons for having to endure it and the good that my experience would bring to my life. It's interesting to me, though, to see the place of surrender I was in right before that event. (Remember the journal?) We don't always know what the healing the Lord intends to do will be "wrapped up in", only that He is faithful; HE knows the end from the beginning and the best way forward, specific to each of His children.

As I sit at this threshold of yet another place of breakthrough, I reread a part of my journal from the morning of my first counseling session at Genesis and it is profound to me: "What will freedom feel like? What does it look and taste like? Freedom from anger, resentment, rejection, pain so raw that it tears my heart up into shreds? Freedom from crippling fear that was passed down to me from the time I was in my mother's womb. I am embarking on a journey to take off the bondage garments that Satan painstakingly handed to me and, not knowing better, I put on." I'm not even on the other side of this yet and I can tell you from the work that's been done thus far that freedom from that bondage tastes, feels, and looks like peace and the ability to rest. It looks like being able to breathe deeply. It looks like not having to control all situations out of absolute fear. It truly looks and feels like freedom.

Friends, God will be faithful to do the healing. Our part is to have courage, be brave, and *trust* that He is good and will bring the healing. I'm not going to say it's been easy, but I will say that living in that place of fear and trauma for forty-six years was much more difficult. I want freedom. I need freedom. There are things that He has for me to do and people He has for me to love, serve, and help in their own journeys. I'm limited when I'm carrying around the chains of anger, pain, and fear. Through His healing, I'm able to be and do all that He has for me. I hope and believe that God will use my story to give even one person, maybe you, hope for his or her own story.

