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I'm Sorry



Like molasses reluctantly ascending from an overturned jar, my words moved from somewhere deep within. The battle raged. I wanted to apologize, and yet, I didn't. One part of my heart was tender, caring, and repentant. Another part was calloused, stubborn, and selfish.

My two natures each sought victory. I identified with Paul, remembering the words he spoke in Romans 7 of the inner war. For the moment, my Christ' nature won, yet often my flesh nature waves its victory flag.

Why is it so difficult to say those two little words? I'm sorry.

We can't maintain healthy relationships without humility and repentance, but we all struggle to allow Christ to rule in our hearts. My flesh nature and your flesh nature are never truly dead in this life and frequently resurrect to remind us.

Paul reminds us in Philippians 2:3-5 that we are to do nothing out of selfish ambitions or vain conceits, but that we are, in humility, to consider others more than ourselves, having the same attitude of Christ.

How do we allow our selfish natures to be crucified? The best answer seems to be "one nail at a time".

Minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, week by week, year by year, we walk with Christ. We learn more of his heart and his nature. We learn more of our own heart and our own nature.

At the moment we first trust him, we receive his nature. The work of our sanctification begins. The journey continues until one day we look upon his face. In the meantime, the Spirit of God within us beckons us to follow his voice, lay down our agendas, love well, and live fully.

Sounds simple, huh?

Yet scripture often uses warfare analogies to picture the reality of the process of sanctification. It's war. We have an enemy. Satan. And we have an enemy. Our flesh.

My flesh always feels I am right and others are wrong, but as I walk with Christ in commitment to his heart, he whispers to me when I will listen. He nudges me, encouraging me to face the truth. He woos me to his heart.

Oh, I am not always wrong, but I am not always right.

An outright apology can go miles in restoring relationships, and it's almost humorous to watch how most people struggle to apologize when they are wrong (remember, I've already admitted I am president of this club sometimes.)

"Well, I felt bad that day."

"I didn't mean that."

“You just misunderstood me.”

Oh, there are a million variations but the bottom line is most of us just hate to apologize. We are selfish. We hold onto our need to be right with everything within us.

It's in our giving up, our humility, our obedience, and our heart for relationships that we can say the words, “I'm sorry.”

Plain and simple.

No excuses.

“I was wrong.”

Not all folks will walk in peace with us ((Romans 12:18), but we are responsible for our own hearts and have to trust God with the outcome. We are not to be doormats, either, but today I am speaking of owning our personal wrongdoing.

Be a peacemaker today. Own your own stuff. Put on your big boy or big girl pants and just say it, “I'm sorry. I was wrong.”

When we come to that place, God's grace rushes into our hearts, healing us, and restoring our peace. His beautiful presence shines inside us like sunshine on a springtime day. We are warmed by His goodness. That goodness, that peace, is there for us all today.

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