



A Pearl of Great Price



Every woman who comes to a shelter may not be a victim of domestic violence, but everyone has suffered some form of abuse from a loved one, or family, or friends, or our society.

As a Christian abused woman, you are probably struggling to decide what you should do, in light of your faith. Wondering what is God's will and direction for you.

Now that you are safe in a shelter, the only place the abuse you have suffered lives on is in your thought life. Our thoughts are the only place we re-live the pain. Our thoughts are the only thing that can keep us from moving on in life to a happy future filled with God's blessings.



So - - - how do I change my thoughts you may ask. All these bad things happened and I can't just "forgive and forget" so don't try and tell me that! I know Jesus said, "*Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, turn the other also.*" (Luke 6:27-29)

Does this mean that Jesus expects us to be doormats and let ourselves be beaten and abused? Not at all. Paul explains more of what Jesus means in Romans 12:14, 17, 19. "*Bless those who are cruel in their attitude toward you; bless and do not curse them - - - Repay no one evil for evil - - - Beloved, never avenge yourselves but leave the way open for God's wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay says the Lord!'*"

Jesus is trying to teach us not to seek revenge – either by actions or by thoughts that we think. To turn the other cheek means do not return blow for blow – physically or mentally. He doesn't mean to allow someone to walk all over us. There is nothing loving in allowing an abusive person to destroy his family or loved ones. Violence in the family is evil and we should hate what is evil and bring it to an end.

God is the one who passes judgement and calls the abusive person to account for it. But we can, and should, say "No" to abuse in the family and pray that he will be able to repent and turn to God and recognize the harm he has done. But pray for him from a safe place like a shelter, don't stay there and be abused while you wait for him to change.



Dwelling on memories of hurt or abuse of any kind, that we can't let go of, can be an irritant, a foreign substance to our happiness and joy and peace. Thoughts about these things have a sandpaper effect, like a little piece of grit that rubs our nerve endings raw when we think about them.

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There is a Scripture that shows us we have something in common with a little sea creature called an oyster. *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in vessels made of earth that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* (2 Corinthians 4:6,7)



The word for earth in the Greek language – that the New Testament Bible was translated from – is the word “oyster” meaning “clay.” We can learn a very important lesson from the lowly oyster because he has the same kind of problem we have, but God gave him a built in solution to it.

An oyster is a soft, slimy muscle that lives in a two sided shell made of hard clay. The shell opens to take in water and nutrients, and closes to squish out the water and waste. But, an interesting thing happens when a piece of grit or sand comes in. The oyster has no way to expel or get rid of that irritating piece of sand. After awhile that constant irritation rubs his tissues raw.

But God, who loves all things great and small, put a substance in the oyster when He created it, to protect it from pain. It’s a very thick, sticky, substance called “mother of pearl.” And every time that piece of sand rubs and irritates the oyster it releases a squirt of thick “mother of pearl” that wraps itself around the piece of sand and gets hard. After many times of irritation followed by the release of “mother of pearl,” enough layers have formed around that piece of sand so that it no longer is irritating, and can’t even be seen. Instead, in it’s place is a beautiful pearl of great value.

We are like the oyster when we have an irritating, painful memory that we have no way of getting rid of. And it just rubs raw every time we think about it – but God has given us a built in healing substance, too, that is even more powerful than the oyster’s “mother of pearl” because it is a spiritual substance.

Our thoughts have no substance to them, so our healing substance has to be spiritual, and it can only be released when we allow it to be. If we are squirming around trying to get released from the irritation by ourselves, mentally gathering and reviewing evidence about that irritation, it cannot be healed. This spiritual substance that will cover and heal it leaving a thing of beauty and great value in it’s place is Gods love and forgiveness.

The only way to cover and recover is to accept the grain of sand, whatever it is, and whenever it hurts say, “I cover this memory with the love of God and I release forgiveness in this situation.” You will be healed and God will be very pleased with you. The answer can only come from inside of you. You have to choose and decide if the painful irritating thoughts and memories will remain ugly grains of sand in your soul (mind, will and emotions), or will they become a lovely pearl of great price. It’s up to you.



“Be not conformed to this world; but be transformed (lifted above the world’s ways) by the renewing (re-thinking) of your mind, that you may do what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God for you.” (Romans 12:2)



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1. What is the only thing that can keep us from a happy life? _____

2. What five things did Jesus say we should do to our enemies? (Luke 6:27-29)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

3. Does this mean Jesus expects us to be doormats? _____

4. If I don't pay back my abuser, who will? (Romans 12:19) _____

5. What do thoughts and memories of abuse do? _____

6. What kind of vessels are we to hold the treasure of the glory of God? (2 Corinthians 4:6,7)

7. What is the word for earth in the Greek language? _____

8. Why are we like an oyster? _____

9. What covers the painful piece of grit in an oyster?

10. What covers the painful piece of grit in my memory?

11. Who can change my gritty memories into pearls of great price? _____

12. What Scripture can help me do this? (Romans 12:2)

(The answer to this question will be your memory verse)

MEMORY VERSE: _____

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1. What is the only thing that can keep us from a happy life? Our thoughts.
2. What five things did Jesus say we should do to our enemies? (Luke 6:27-29)
 - 1) Love them
 - 2) Do good to them
 - 3) Bless them
 - 4) Pray for them
 - 5) Turn the other cheek
3. Does this mean Jesus expects us to be doormats? No, not at all.
4. If I don't pay back my abuser, who will? (Romans 12:19) God will repay him.
5. What do thoughts and memories of abuse do? Have a sandpaper effect like a little piece of grit.
6. What kind of vessels are we to hold the treasure of the glory of God? (2 Corinthians 4:6,7)
We are vessels made of earth.
7. What is the word for earth in the Greek language? Oyster.
8. Why are we like an oyster? Because we're both made of clay.
9. What covers the painful piece of grit in an oyster? A sticky substance called "mother of pearl"
10. What covers the painful piece of grit in my memory? A spiritual substance called "love"
11. Who can change my gritty memories into pearls of great price? Only me!
12. What Scripture can help me do this? (Romans 12:2)

MEMORY VERSE: *"Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may do the good, acceptable and perfect will of God for you."*