

Restoration – Are You Ready?

When I attended my first freedom retreat, I began in earnest to inspect the situations and actions of my past. I discovered the various barriers that I had created to protect myself. Unfortunately—or, perhaps, fortunately—these same barriers were obstructing my relationship with God, so eradicating them would mean a new freedom that I had no idea existed.

During the retreat, I inventoried my life. In doing so, I had two valuable realizations. First, memories of drug and alcohol abuse within my birth family bounced back into the forefront of my thoughts. I was ashamed and embarrassed by my dad.

Second, onlookers of my life might say that I've had great success in my career, my marriage, as a mother, daughter, and sister. Yet, my dad's perfectionist expectations and the withholding of praise and affection still caused me to feel like I could never measure up, particularly to his vision for me.

I was once and for all ready to face this hard truth that had affected me so deeply. In much the same way that I removed myself from my father's life, I was resisting a deeper relationship with God. Unlike my dad, God was perfect and loved me as a Heavenly Father. The more I embraced God's love, the more my bitterness towards my dad dissolved. Inside I shouted, "Yahoo! Hallelujah! God loves me, no matter what." Joy filled my life as the burden lifted.

I returned multiple times over the next ten years to that freedom retreat. Each time, I discovered a new insight embedded deeply about myself, another truth that needed to be freed. Once I refocused on God's love and forgiveness, I realized that I needed to forgive in other areas of my life.

I'd blamed God and others for my wrongful actions and negative thoughts, as well as the hurtful actions of others. I thought

I'd already forgiven my mom; however, I worked to release any residual bitterness. I even forgave God. He didn't need my forgiveness. It was me who needed to release the bitterness that unforgiveness harbors. Finally, I forgave myself for the years I'd missed out on my relationship with God.

One time, I released my need to perform for God. At another retreat, I recognized I was not an accident, and my days were ordained in his book (Psalm 139). I also came to learn that God had a purpose for my life, greater than anything I could imagine.

When I joined the staff at FP4H, we developed the freedom retreat. Have you attended a freedom retreat? Do you need to pursue the next level of freedom? Are you ready for restoration? Join us:
<https://www.firstplaceforhealth.com/events/restore-me-making-us-new-setting-us-free/>

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