

## INSTANT REPLAY

*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."*

PSALM 91:1-2 NIV



When you're watching a ball game on TV, you have the benefit of instant replay for questionable calls. Say a player slides into third base and the ump cries, "Out!" Only instant replay shows otherwise. He was clearly safe.

You don't have the benefit of seeing your past through a slow, precise lens. No doubt you've solidified memories in your brain one way when, in fact, they might not be that way at all.

This is one of the chief reasons you need to learn to let go of past hurts. Some of your memories could be skewed. Perhaps some of the things you're hanging on to didn't happen exactly as you remember.

No matter how things went in the past, God has marked you "safe" today. The haunts of yesterday aren't here to torment you anymore. There's a reason they call it the past. Yesterday has passed, after all.

*You are my refuge and fortress, Jesus. I'm truly safe with You.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION :

*Safety is always a given for a child of God.*

## HEALING IN RELATIONSHIPS

Have you ever experienced a broken relationship? Maybe your actions or words hurt someone you love. Now you are filled with stress and regret, wondering how you can make it better. Or maybe someone you loved and trusted took advantage of you or said hurtful things. How will you ever find the strength to forgive them? How will you ever move on?

James 5:16 (NKJV) says, "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

At times like these, we need to turn to God for guidance. God's Word advises us, when restoring a broken relationship, to be humble, offer forgiveness, communicate well, and have patience through the process. Here are some Bible verses that can help during difficult times of healing:

Remain humble: *"With all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, [bear] with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Ephesians 4:2-3 NKJV).

Offer forgiveness: *"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you"* (Ephesians 4:32 NKJV).

Communicate well: *"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"* (James 1:19 NKJV).

Have patience: *"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer"* (Romans 12:12 NIV).



## HE WILL USE IT FOR HIS GLORY

*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.*

JAMES 1:12 ESV



You thought that friendship would last forever. You were BFFs from the moment you met. But something went terribly wrong, and now you're heartbroken. The hours of late-night chats. The shared secrets. The silly giggles and laughs over nonsensical things.

Letting go of a relationship, especially one you enjoyed for years, can be devastating. And heartbreaking. It takes a supernatural move of God to bring comfort to your broken heart after losing a good friend.

No matter what has happened, God will bring comfort, hope, and peace once again. He will. That heart of yours will heal over time. And no doubt you'll learn some lessons—however hard—about the next friendship that comes your way. In some ways you're sadder, but you're wiser.

God will use this situation for your benefit and for His glory. He always does. So go ahead and grieve, but anticipate healing. It's just around the corner. And remember, Jesus is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. That's one friendship that will never end.

*I anticipate healing, Jesus. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*No matter what, God will use my situation for His glory.*

## THE BIBLICAL WAY

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

JAMES 5:16 NIV



It feels impossible. There's been a breach in your friendship. You haven't spoken in weeks. But there's a nudging in your heart that somehow things could mend if you would just set a plan in motion. But you're clueless about what that plan should look like.

So you pray. You give the situation to God. You ask for healing to mend the rift. Then He encourages you to reach out with a text. Just a few words: I MISS YOU.

And you wait. Time passes. And then a response comes: I MISS YOU TOO.

It's a start. You draw a deep breath and issue an apology for any role you might have played in the broken places. She responds in kind. And soon you're talking about the kids, the upcoming vacation, all the usual things.

Broken relationships aren't always going to mend. Sometimes God separates you from people for your own protection. But there are still situations where you know in your heart that the friendship isn't truly over yet. So leave the door cracked if you feel that nudge from the Spirit. He'll show you what to do.

*I trust You, Jesus. If the door is meant to swing wide, it will. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*I can't fix broken relationships, but Jesus can.*

## LET GO OF THE SCENT OF DEATH

*"He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things have disappeared."*

REVELATION 21:4 GNT



Imagine opening the garage door and finding a dead mouse inside. From the looks of things, he's been there awhile. He's stiff and cold. And there's an odor. A bad one.

You do your best to clean it up, but even after bleaching the area, you still smell that lingering scent of death in the air.

This might seem like an extreme example, but that's kind of what it's like when you refuse to allow healing to come. Death takes its place. Rigor takes its place. And before long, there's a "scent" about you that others notice.

Oh, you do your best to cover it up, but it's there, nonetheless.

It's time to let go of unforgiveness, friend. It's time to let go of anger. It's time to give your broken heart, your errant thoughts, to Jesus once and for all. He will give those icky things a proper funeral, and no scent of death will remain. When the Bible says, "The old things have disappeared," it means everything, even the very scent of death.

*Jesus, I'm ready for the funeral to take place so that these things that have plagued me will be a thing of the past.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*I won't tolerate the smell of death. I will ask Jesus to deal with it.*

## SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

*The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult.*

PROVERBS 12:16 ESV



Relationships are hard, but codependent relationships are over-the-top difficult. When you're in a precarious friendship where the other person has an unhealthy attachment to you, situations can get tricky.

You want to be a good friend. You've tried. But she's consuming you. Draining you. Accusing you of not being caring enough, no matter how much you give. And you're about to reach the breaking point. Should you cut off the friendship altogether?

You weren't meant to fix everything. If you sweep in and play the role that only God should play, your friend will never learn anything. You have to take steps backward from the friendship until she gets the message that you're not her be-all, end-all.

It's not going to be easy, but when relationships reach the codependent stage, something has to give. So take this as a sign. Back away from the fire—for your safety and your loved one's, as well.

*Show me what to do with the tough ones, Jesus! Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*I'm not the fixer of all things. But my God is.*

## ALL TANGLED UP

*"And when you stand and pray, forgive anything you may have against anyone, so that your Father in heaven will forgive the wrongs you have done."*

MARK 11:25 GNT



Have you ever tried to run a hairbrush through a little girl's hair? Maybe you hit a spot with a giant tangle and the child started to cry. There's only one way to untangle hair—gently. Slowly. Usually you work your way up from the bottom.

Some friendships are like that tangled hair. It's going to take time and patience to unravel the mess, and there may be a little crying along the way. (Hey, no one said healing was easy! It's a process.)

Think about the last time you reached for a string of Christmas lights from a storage box and found them all twisted up. It took a while to get them separated, but once you did, they shimmered as brightly as ever.

That's how relationships are too. Take the time to heal correctly, and in the end all tangles will be gone, all twists and kinks will be worked out, and the relationship will shine as never before.

*I'm going to need Your patience as we unravel this mess together, Lord! Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*Tangled messes don't have to be permanent. They can be untangled with patience and hard work.*

## LIVE AT PEACE WITH EVERYONE

*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

ROMANS 12:18 NIV



Have you ever watched a litter of puppies at play? They're having so much fun, tossing and turning, yipping at one another. Until one of them decides to bare his teeth. Then all bets are off! Before you know it, the whole pack is in a squabble, and they don't stop until their owner steps in.

Sometimes that's how friend groups are. You all get along great. You play together. You eat together. You even worship together. Then someone decides to stir up trouble. Before you know it, the whole friend group is going at it.

It's hard to reconcile with one person, let alone a whole friend group! That's why it's important to be a peacemaker when you can.

Look at today's verse. Home in on the words "*as far as it depends on you.*"

God knew it wouldn't be easy. But you really can be a peacemaker, even when the rest of your friends are squabbling!

*You see to the very heart of my friend groups, Jesus. Help me to be the best friend I can be and to be a peacemaker to the best of my ability. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*Just because everyone else is squabbling doesn't mean I have to.*

## GRACE AND MERCY

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 JOHN 1:9 ESV



Grace and mercy—two things you hope others will extend to you when you mess up. A little grace covers a lot. And those who extend mercy to the ones who've hurt them? Those are some amazing people right there!

Here's the thing: God doesn't just want you to receive grace and mercy. He wants you to extend it to others, even the ones who've hurt you. He's not asking you to be a doormat, but there are situations where you should probably just forgive the person who hurt you and let it go, especially if she has asked for your forgiveness and tried to make things right.

Why is it so important to forgive and offer grace? Because God forgives. . . as you forgive. If you don't let it go, then He doesn't have to let your sins go either.

That's pretty heavy stuff, but it's what the Bible says. So choose grace. Choose a merciful response to the ones who've wounded you. Then watch as God pours mercy and grace out on you too!

*It's not easy, but today I will choose to extend grace to the ones who've hurt me. Jesus. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*Grace and mercy are gifts I can offer to others.*

## SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

*Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head.*

EPHESIANS 4:15 GNT



You're watching a friend go down the wrong path. You know she's on a course that's heading for a cliff. And you try to tell her, but she's not listening. Instead, defiant, she holds up her hand and says, "Let me live my own life."

And you have. You've backed away. You've prayed. You've given her space. But it's obvious she's on a course that won't end well.

So what do you do? Do you try once more to intervene, to bring healing to her heart and your relationship? Or do you walk away completely?

Though it might seem impossible, you might want to try one more time to speak the truth. You can do so in love, with her well-being at the forefront of the conversation. If she still won't receive it, then, for your own protection, it might be good to step away from the relationship—at least for now. You don't want her to drag you down with her.

It's not unkind to speak hard truth. In fact, it's more unkind not to. So, deep breath. Let's give this one more shot!

*I don't know why I'm so nervous to speak the truth. Jesus. Please give me courage and peace. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*Kindness and truthfulness go hand in hand. I can be both kind and truthful.*

## IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO HEAL

*Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you;  
he will never permit the righteous to be moved.*

PSALM 55:22 ESV



Do you have relational issues that go back to childhood? Maybe you had a deadbeat dad who left the family never to return. Or maybe you had a sibling who did something cruel to hurt your family—something that had devastating consequences.

It's hard to recover from childhood relational traumas. As a little one, you simply didn't have the tools necessary to mend the heartbreak caused by others, especially adults.

Now here you are, an adult yourself, having to make adult decisions. But the lingering pain caused long ago by people has left its mark.

It's not too late to heal. You may never see that person again. (Or you might.) But the truth is, God can bring complete and total healing to your heart and give you the tools you need, not only to forgive, but to live in freedom. You don't have to repeat the patterns learned as a child. You can walk in liberty from now on, completely healed from the past.

*I'm so glad I don't have to worry about the pain of yesterday.  
Jesus, I don't have to repeat the patterns taught to me as a  
child. You've set me free, and I'm so grateful. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*I can live in the freedom of Christ.*

## PATIENCE, FRIEND!

*It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to  
win control over yourself than over whole cities.*

PROVERBS 16:32 GNT



We live in a world filled with people who have different personalities and different belief systems. What's perfectly acceptable and normal to one person might be taboo to another. It's hard to know how to communicate effectively with so many different perspectives at play.

This is particularly hard when you're thrown into a situation where you have no choice but to play nice with one another. At work, say. Maybe you've been placed on a team with someone who rubs you the wrong way. You're doing your best, but the other person sure doesn't make it easy.

Relational issues can reach the boiling point if we don't respond kindly. But God can bring healing even in the toughest work-related relationship if you ask Him to be at the center of it. And remember, a little patience goes a long, long way when you're trying to figure out how best to communicate.

*Show me how to be patient with others, Jesus.  
It's not easy, so I'll need Your help for sure. Amen.*

### PRAYER JAR INSPIRATION:

*It is better to be patient than powerful.*