

A Newsletter from On Wings Like A Dove Ministry

August 2021 Vol. 17 Issue 8

455 South Church Street
Winston Salem, NC 27101

Office Hours:
Tuesday-Thursday
10 am-2 pm
or by appointment
336-829-5060

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Prayer Support Groups

No Monday Night
Prayer in July and August
Prayer Support Kickoff
September 9

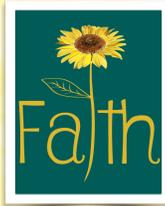
River Oaks Church
Clemmons, NC
2nd and 4th Tuesdays
at 6:30 pm
Room #4

Led by Jeff & Sherye Hall

Ladies Bible Study

Each Tuesday
at On Wings Office
from 12:30 - 2:00

We are studying
Don't Give the Enemy
a Seat At Your Table
by Louie Giglio
Come Join Us!



What Causes Estrangement?

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live in peace with everyone. Romans 12:18

At our last Prayer Support Group meeting, one of our mothers made a statement that On Wings walks beside loved one's dealing with all sorts of issues other than addiction. We often talk about addiction because most deal with the heartache of addiction in their families, yet estrangement from a loved one is something most of us deal with in one form or another.

So, what does it mean to be estranged? The definition I found says that we are no longer being on friendly terms or part of a social group together. It goes on to say that it is the loss of a previously existing relationship between family members, through physical and/or emotional distancing, often to the extent that there is negligible or no communication between the individuals involved for a prolonged period.

So, what does it mean to estrange from someone? It is to arouse especially mutual enmity or indifference in (someone) where there had formerly been love, affection, or friendliness.

Parental estrangement is sadly common in even Christian families. Let us look at some causes:

Addiction—Alcohol, drugs, and sexual dysfunction are issues. When you confront a family member who is abusing a substance it often causes strained relationships. You feel as if you are in a no-win situation because to say nothing is not good either.

Mental Illness—Sometimes family members do not know how to help their loved one who is an adult. Confronting is often taken as condemning, so we choose to stay quiet so as not to rock the boat. Keeping the peace is often difficult.

Abuse—This comes in all forms; physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and sexual. Often when confronted change is promised but often reoccurs. Setting boundaries is necessary in this case for sure.

Sexual Choice—Splits due to an adult child who lives a life of sexual immorality or an alternative lifestyle. You can hate the sin but still love the person with boundaries. But sadly, families are often separated over this issue.

These are just a few reasons for estrangement which brings heartache and pain to all. We continually analyze and re-analyze what we could have done differently because we often blame ourselves for the others actions. We want reconciliation and healing in the relationship, and it brings us agony when we are continually kept at bay by the other person. Sadly, it causes division in the whole family.

Many of our mothers are not allowed to be part of their grandchildren's lives as well due to the rift between their parent and grandparents. This only compounds the pain as the parents often use it to punish their parents.

The estrangement can be short lived but occur over and over or last year after year. Either way it is a tool the enemy uses to rip homes apart.

We will look at ways to heal, forgive and move on in your walk with the Lord next month.

~ Sandra



I have heard this silver analogy many times, yet the story becomes more beautiful, more real each time I read it. There are different versions of the story but the analogy remains the same.

The Refiner's Fire

As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities. The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot; then she thought again about the verse that says: 'He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver.' (Malachi 3:3) She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered, yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, 'How do you know when the silver is fully refined?' He smiled at her and answered, 'Oh, that's easy – when I see my image in it.'

If the silver is left 20 or 30 seconds too long in the refiner's fire, it is ruined. You may ask, "Then how do you know it is finished?" When the refiner sees his reflection in the silver he knows it is time to pull the silver out of the fire. Think about this for a moment. What if we are the silver? Doesn't life, often times, make us feel like we are in the refiner's fire? Could it be that God is refining us for His divine and perfect purpose for our lives? How are we responding to the heat? How are we reacting to the purification process?

After refining, silver has four characteristics:

1. It becomes what the refiner intends for it to become.
2. It has increased value.
3. It reflects the refiner.
4. It is cherished by the refiner.

KEY FACTS

THE REFINER'S FIRE IS LONELY

Only one piece of silver can be refined at a time. No one truly knows what we deal with personally and when we are in the refiner's fire, it can truly feel overwhelming and lonely.

THE REFINER'S FIRE INCREASES INTIMACY WITH GOD

Some intimacy comes through pain and suffering. Why is this true? It is because we get desperately transparent with God when the fire is hot. When we are at the place when we feel we cannot take one more moment of stress, that's when God seems so close. His promise is to never leave us or forsake us. He is with us in the heat of the fire. He is with us in the hardest of trials. He will enable and empower us to overcome.

THE REFINER'S FIRE HAS A FUTURE PURPOSE

God has a plan for the silver and sees the end result. He knows exactly when to bring the silver out of the fire. It is when He sees Himself in the reflection of the silver that He knows the silver is ready.

The hotter the fire, the closer we are to the end of the process. We may be tempted to say, "Okay God, take me out early in the process." The problem is, we usually have to go through the process again. The purification

process is often times longer than any of us want to stay.

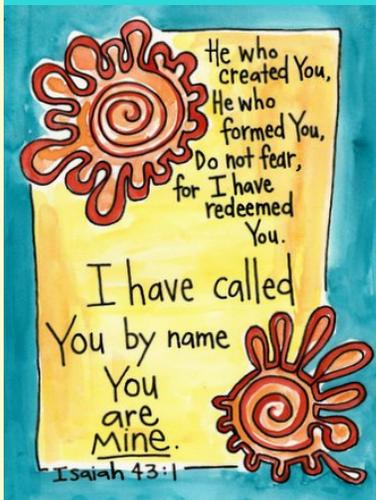
SILVER HAS TO BE REFINED TO BE USED IN GREAT PLACES

Remember, the silver will only be used in high places because of the process. The silver has the refiner's complete attention.

When God is silent it means He is at work! Jesus has not forgotten you. He has you in the palm of His hand through the entire process. Be patient, and watch God take you to places you never dreamed. Trust Him in the process.

GOD has you right where He wants you.

It's up to you how you will respond to
THE REFINER'S FIRE



Prayer Thoughts

When Forgetting Is Not Enough

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

I've had some things to happen in my life that I would just as soon forget. I bet you have too. But as soon as I start to shred the memory and throw it in the trash, God says, "Hold up. I've got a good purpose for that bad story."

Joseph learned that lesson, too. Joseph had been sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, falsely accused of sexual harassment, and left in a prison to die. Then God miraculously rescued him from prison and made him second in command to the Egyptian Pharaoh. By his thirty-seventh birthday, Joseph had two sons. One he named Manasseh, which means "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." The second son he named Ephraim, which means "it is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

Many years after his sons had been born, Joseph learned that his father, Jacob, was ill. So he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim and traveled for one last visit.

When they arrived, Jacob said, "Bring the boys to me so I may bless them."

Joseph brought his sons to his father's bedside. He placed Ephraim on his right toward Jacob's left hand and Manasseh, his first born, on his left toward Jacob's right hand. But instead of giving the blessing to Joseph's firstborn, Jacob reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger. Then he crossed his arms and put his left hand on Manasseh's head.

Joseph tried to stop his father from giving the blessing to the second born rather than the firstborn, but his father refused.

"I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations" (Genesis 48:19). So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

What a beautiful picture. Yes, Joseph had a life of trouble and suffering at the hands of those who abused, neglected and betrayed him. But God didn't want him to merely forget his suffering as the name Manasseh implied. He wanted him to be fruitful in his suffering as the name Ephraim implied.

It is the same with you and with me. God does not want us to simply *forget* the pain of the past. He wants us to be *fruitful* in the land of our suffering! Use it for good. Go back to today's truth. God doesn't comfort us just to make us comfortable. He comforts us to make us comfort-able. Able to comfort those with the comfort we have received. That is the good fruit. How is God calling you to use your seemingly bad stories for a good purpose?

Dear Lord,

I thank You that nothing is ever wasted in our life experiences. The world says, "Just forget about it" when it comes to our past struggles. You say, "Just use it! Be fruitful!" Show me ways that I can use what I have gone through to help other people. Lord I pray that You will make me fruitful in the land of my suffering.
~In Jesus' Name, Amen

Taken from Sharon Jaynes *Girlfriends in God*
March 29, 2019

