

HHM - 22 Let in Go for Your Sake w/Aleechea Pitts



Aleechea Pitts 0:00

Forgiveness can't be based on how you feel you have to choose to forgive. And you continue to make this choice to forgive until your feelings match up with the choice.

David Sandstrom 0:17

Welcome to the Holistic Health Matters Podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential in body, mind and spirit so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, Naturopathic Doctor and Biblical Health Coach, and this is episode number 22. Today we have on the show, Aleechia Pitts. Aleechia is an experienced lecturer and has extensive training in biblical counseling. She's gone from welfare mother to working for social services. Alicia is a celebrated writer and Christian speaker. She's dedicated to providing a spiritual pathway for the growth and development of mankind. Her work includes four published books, one of which is on forgiveness. It's called Let it Go For Your Sake. And that's what we're going to be talking about today. Aleechia, welcome to Holistic Health Matters. Thanks for being here.

Aleechea Pitts 1:14

Thank you for having me, David.

David Sandstrom 1:16

I saw on your resume, that you are a police chaplain. And I find that fascinating. I've heard of sports chaplains, professional sports teams often have a chaplain, but a police chaplain, that's something different, you know, athletes are under a great deal of stress. I have a friend who was once a play for the major leagues. He played for the Seattle Mariners for a little while. And he told me that, you know, Dave is professional sports is great, but there probably is no other career with more of a What have you done for me lately? attitude. So they're under a great deal of pressure to perform. And they can probably use a little counseling once in a while and considering what's going on today with our police departments around the nation. I think that these people are under a great deal of stress. So tell me a little bit about that job.

Aleechea Pitts 2:04

Well, it's very rewarding. I've built relationships with the officers. I go to their police briefings, I do ride alongs and any other type of activities that they may have going on dealing with the community. They call for the chaplains. Now I'm one of about 17 chaplains.

David Sandstrom 2:25

Wow.

Aleechea Pitts 2:25

But there are only two females, which is including myself, and I am the first Afro-American female chaplain of this police department.

David Sandstrom 2:35

Wow. That's really good. So they've had this going on for a while then.

Aleechea Pitts 2:39

Yes. Also, with this being connected to the police department, we also have chaplains that are at our schools in this area as well. So I am a lead chaplain for one of the high schools in Melville, New Jersey as well.

David Sandstrom 2:53

Wow. That's super interesting. I've got a friend that does some some work in high schools and school children today are really going under a lot of stress with with the social isolation is going on. And it was it started before COVID. You know, there's with social media and whatnot, the our kids are under a great deal of pressure as well. And a lot of them don't feel heard. They don't feel like anybody cares. And they need help communicating with one another the skill of sitting down face to face and having a conversation is almost a lost skill these days with with our young people.

Aleechea Pitts 3:28

Yeah, technology did it with these with the cell phones and me being in a school system. You have said right, well, kids are dealing with a lot. And the truth of the matter is they should a lot of the things that they're dealing with, they should not be dealing with. As a child, they should only be worried about doing schoolwork or chores, you know, not some of the other things that they are contending with right now.

David Sandstrom 3:53

Yeah, I have two teenage daughters. And they're living in a different world that I lived in when I was in high school, ones in college now once in high school, and I have 11 year old twins as well. But my my oldest daughter, she was born into the computer age. And this is a funny story. When she was about, I would say five or six. She looks at me with a curious look on her face and says, Dad, when you were a kid, did you have a Mac or a PC? I said, Hannah, when I was a kid, there was no such thing as a computer. And she says, no computer? How did you get on the internet then? I'm like, Yeah, it's a different world. And they're contending with a lot of stress as a result of social media with bullying that we never dreamed of. We didn't have to worry about as kids hats off to you for doing that work. That's that's an important work and our young people really need it. Yes, yeah. Well, Aleechia, I wanted to talk about a topic that most people are a little uncomfortable with, but it's called forgiveness. And it's it's my contention that we maximize our health potential when we align our lives more fully with God's design for spirit, mind and body. And one of the things we're told in Scripture over and over, is to forgive one another. And God takes that very seriously because he knows the detrimental effect it can have on our health when we withhold forgiveness, it causes problems. So I know you wrote a book on that it's called, let's see, let it go for your sake. Right.

Aleechia Pitts 5:25

Mm hmm.

David Sandstrom 5:26

And so I you're an expert on this subject, I'd love to hear what you have to say on it.

Aleechia Pitts 5:31

Well, I always like, like to tell people that I'm just not writing from hidden knowledge, I'm writing from experience. You're looking at someone who has to exercise forgiveness. I was molested at the ages of 7,11 and 14. And one of my molesters at the age of 14 also held me hostage at gunpoint. So I tell people, yeah. So I tell people, if I can figure the gift, surely, you can forgive. And many times. Some of us God has put it in us that we can easily forgive. It's part of our character makeup is part of our personality. And a lot of times you will find people that find it hardest to forgive, they kind of were they feelings, their emotions on their sleeve.

Those are the ones people that are easily angered. They are the ones that majority of the times have a hard time letting it go. And the reason why we have a hard time letting it go is number one, we are stuck with the memory of what has happened to us. And second of all, we are stuck with our feelings. And so forgiveness can't be based on how you feel you have to choose to forgive. And you continue to make this choice to forgive until your feelings match up with the choice.

David Sandstrom 6:54

Yeah, if we if we wait till we feel like forgiving, we'll probably never get around to it. Right?

Aleechea Pitts 6:59

Absolutely correct. Correct.

David Sandstrom 7:01

Mm hmm. Well, you know, one of the things I talked about in my book, The Christians Guide to Holistic Health, is we need to process our emotions. God says Be angry, do not sin. So anger is not the problem. It's it's our reaction to the anger, right? So we need to experience these emotions God gave them to us. They're there to tell us something about what's going on in our hearts. But when it comes to the toxic emotions, like anger, resentment, bitterness, rage, we need to process them and let them go. We don't want to get emotionally constipated with those kinds of toxic emotions because they will. It's my belief that we will literally hold on to toxins, when we poison ourselves with the kind of those kinds of emotions that thought life.

Aleechea Pitts 7:44

Absolutely. And I agree with you, TD Jakes says something that is so profound, he said, when you're getting angry, he said, it's better for you to let that go at least within five minutes. The longer you hold on to it, the harder it is to let it go. And so it has been scientifically proven because we're talking about being holistic and healing. It has been scientifically proven that unforgiveness, you have people that have cancer, a lot of cancer patients have unforgiveness, it affects your body arthritis. There's all kinds of different things. And not even just your body, but it affects your prayer life. The Bible says when you stand praying, forgive and see as a as a Christian as a believer. It is a commandment, this is something that we must do. We can't pick and choose to do it as as a believer, as a follower

of Jesus Christ. This is this is a mandate, this is something that we have to do. And it's a lifestyle. And I always say this, that if forgiveness was never exercised, no one would be in no type of relationships, whether it's romantic, or platonic, no one would be in any type of relationship. So you're going to need forgiveness in order to maintain those relationships. And not only that are always proposed this question, if you were the person who have wronged another, wouldn't you want forgiveness? Right? Nine times out of 10 people people's responses, yes, course. It's we all want it, but it's giving it that's the problem, right?

David Sandstrom 9:20

Mm hmm. I you know, I love what you said a moment ago about we'll never have a relationship. Have you ever read anything by John Eldridge?

Aleechea Pitts 9:28

The name sounds familiar.

David Sandstrom 9:29

His ministry is called Ransomed Heart. And he's got an awesome book called Waking the Dead. And he has a chapter in there on forgiveness. And he makes this quote in there. I wish I'd have thought this but he thought it up. It's I got to give him credit. He said, Living in community is like we're a bunch of porcupines on a cold night. We have to get together for the warmth. But when we get too close, we poke each other with our spines.

Aleechea Pitts 9:53

Mm hmm.

David Sandstrom 9:54

So forgiveness is something we're going to be in a relationship. We've got to learn this skill. We've got to be able to do this right? Or our relationships are going to suffer. And our physical vitality will suffer as well.

Aleechea Pitts 10:06

Yeah, and not only that, our relationship with God, because because we say the Our Father prayer all the time, but I don't think a lot of times we really register what we're really saying, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. See, that's based on condition. If you do this, then God will do that. And see, that's all part of us receiving forgiveness to just like the parable of the man who owes so much he owed this, this this ruler money,

right? And he pleased and he begs for mercy. And the ruler has mercy on him. And then he finds somebody that owes him little to nothing. And he chokes him up by the neck. And those servants see this going on. And they go back to the ruler and tell tell them what has happened. And so here it is, this is how I always like to define forgiveness, forgiveness is extending grace to others, or acting in grace towards others, right. So here it is, again. And we want that, that same grace, we have to extend it to others. And always say it like this, God judges us, according to how we treat one another. The Bible says How can you say you love God, and you have not seen and you can't even love your brothers and sisters. So you see every day The Bible calls that man a liar. So a lot. A lot of times, God judges us according to how we treat one another. That's why Jesus said by this, will men know that she are my disciples, when you have love for one another. And one of the characteristics of love in First Corinthians chapter 13, it says love keeps no record of wrongs. See, when you truly forgive, you're not keeping a record. Now we know people say, Oh, I forgive you. But I won't forget. Now, technically, you won't forget, because we're human beings, we have this this memory, right. But you can forget to the point where you refuse to keep bringing up the offense.

David Sandstrom 12:04

Yeah. When we forgive somebody, it's my contention that, you know, we're not God, we're not gonna not remember the event, we will remember, but if we've forgiven from the heart, we can remember the event with more grace, that that knot in the stomach won't be there anymore.

Aleechea Pitts 12:21

Yeah, because we've let it go.

David Sandstrom 12:23

I think that's a super important point here, we've got to understand that we're not withholding forgiveness, so that we can punish that person. When we withhold forgiveness. It's like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

Aleechea Pitts 12:36

Yeah, that's what we're doing.

Aleechea Pitts 12:38

You know, in that parable that you mentioned a moment ago, it didn't that that servant that didn't do well with forgiveness. When he was brought to the master, it didn't go well for him did it? He was called the wicked evil servant. Right?

Aleechea Pitts 12:49

Yeah.

David Sandstrom 12:49

So I think you know, of course, I don't think that's literal. But there's a there's an important lesson there. And that is, Hey, this is not good, guys. You don't want to behave this way. I know your flesh tells you to. But there's a higher road that Jesus taught us to live our lives a little differently, you know, countercultural.

Aleechea Pitts 13:06

Yes, yes, and affects everything that we do. Because when you hold on to unforgiveness, it can affect future relationships. Because if you put this wall up, now, you're treating everybody as the same individual who offended you. And this person is not that same individual. So it can affect relationships, it can help, it affects your your health, it can affect your your relationship with God. So it goes into all different areas. And I remember when there was a particular situation that I've talked about in the book, where I had a pastor, colleague, friend betray me, and I have to give him pretty much everyone else attached to this particular situation. And the Lord spoke to me and he said, until you let it go, you won't even be able to move forward. Because here it is, again, the scripture says, you know, if, if we even if he even comes to our mind that something is not right. We are to lay our gift at the altar, and go and try to reconcile, see that that's the disconnect right there. A lot of people are not even trying to put the foot forward to try to reconcile. So he said, you know, leave your gift at the altar, go get that straight, and then come back and then pick up your gift. And even the scripture says g which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, who's going to be the spiritually mature person to say, look, come on, let us reason two together, you know, as the scripture says, and all thy getting, get an understanding, because a lot of times when you have a conversation, you'll find out somewhere around in there, there's some kind of miscommunication that that has has went on, but the longer that time period goes by the harder it is to reco ncile that relationship.

David Sandstrom 14:51

Yeah. You know, you said something a moment ago, that in order to move forward, we have to let go with the past. I like to look at forgiveness as Monkey Bars. Go by an elementary school, when you see the monkey bars, the kids are out there playing. But when you're hanging from a monkey bar, you've got to let go of that bar behind you, and reach for the one forward. And if you don't let go that one, you ain't going anywhere. And it's the same idea with forgiveness. We don't want to get stuck in the past. We're living in the moment, and hopefully going to make our future better by dealing with our moments wisely. correctly.

Aleechea Pitts 15:25

Yes, yes. And then there's times that people think they have forgiven and they have not. And one of the things that you mentioned earlier, if you are being emotionally moved, when some when a person mentions a particular person's name, then that's a clear indication that you have not forgiven yet. And that's why I always tell people, you can't do blanket forgiveness, it's that process, you have to name offenders, you have to name situations. So that way later down the line, when something happens, it won't trigger you again, because you've done that work, forgiveness, it is a process. And and you have to be willing, you said earlier, you know, this is a subject that people don't want to talk about. But you have to be willing to want to do it, in spite of how you may feel, you know, and you can begin to pray, God anointed me and my emotions helped me to forget, we got to keep choosing to forgive, you know, it's not one day we're going to forgive. And then the next day, we don't, it is a lifestyle, and it is something that has to be consistent, and it has to be constant. And then if we just empathize and put ourselves in that person's situation, you know, if it was me, and I did this, how would I? How would I want people to respond to me?

David Sandstrom 16:39

Yeah,

Aleechea Pitts 16:39

I want mercy. I want the grace, you know, and so when we go forward, and we keep that in the forethought of our mind, it makes it easier for us to forgive.

David Sandstrom 16:51

Well, you know, as Christians, as followers of Christ, we, we welcome God's forgiveness to us. We know we need it, we've recognized that, and we welcome that into our lives. And we acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior, we accept that gift. But it's a matter of stewardship, that we offer that same forgiveness to other people, that unconditional keep no record of wrongs, forgiveness, and it is a process. And I believe it's a supernatural one in the flesh and the natural, we're not capable of doing this. We need God's help with this, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Greater is He that is in you that he does in the world. Yeah. So we've got to tap into the power of the Holy Spirit to make this happen. And when we do, there are some real benefits to our not only our spiritual condition, but our mental emotional condition and our physical condition as well, because they're all there as well, because they're all interconnected. Yes. You know, I'm really glad you mentioned the process to this, because it's very difficult to just sit down and say, Okay, I'm going to forgive and just in a moment, do it. So in my book, the Christians guide to holistic health, I have a whole chapter on forgiveness. And in that chapter, I have an exercise I call it the forgiveness exercise. And what it does is it kind of takes you by the hand and lead you a step at a time through this process of truly forgiving from the heart and experience the peace, and the letting go that God wants for you. And it's it's very powerful. So if anybody would like to get that exercise, they can get a free download of that chapter from my book, if they go to my website, DavidSandstrom.com. This is episode number 22. There'll be a form on there to fill out to get a free download of that chapter.

Aleechea Pitts 18:29

Yes. And as the key thing that you said, David, is doing it within the spirit, because one thing about it, God is just and he's fair. So anything that he tells us to do is because we have the capability within us to do it. If he told us to do something that we could not do that will make him unfair, and unjust. So here it is, again, even when we follow him, right? He said, Any man desire to follow after me, he must what first deny himself, a lot of times, we use the entitlement, I feel justified and how I'm feeling. And when it comes to Christ, you're yours. You have to deny yourself. And then you got to take up that cross and you got to follow him. Everybody got their different crosses to bear. But the initial first thing and those two are the most hardest things that people deal with is the self denial, and taking up that cross and following him. So you know it. I mean, it is just so in depth when you're dealing with unforgiveness. And I'll give you a prime example. Just recently, a lady inbox me on Facebook. And she tells me

that she was offended by something that I said, Now, mind you, I vaguely recall what she was talking about. But how about she said she was talking about something that had occurred almost a year ago. And I said to her, I said, I wish you would have Let me know sooner has been this, you know, but I didn't get caught up in self right, I could have easily been like well know what you I could have been belligerent about it. But I didn't I put my pride aside. And I humbled myself and I said, if I said anything to offend you, I do apologize, I don't, I don't recall what you're talking about. But I do apologize. And immediately, she said she received it. And this is the key here. There are times when people really want to reconcile, they will immediately forgive you, but people that don't, you know, the Bible talks about a person who has been offended their heart to be won over, because they're stuck in that that vein, and it is nothing that you can say, it's almost like a person carrying a spirit of spirit of offense, they are looking for something to be offended about. And so on. This show me and her quick response to say I receive your apology on you know, I forgive you, it showed me that she wanted it a relationship to be reconciled. And that's the difference in that. And sometimes you may not can reconcile, but we as brothers and sisters in Christ, when we have done our part, right, we come together, we try to reason we try to get an understanding. And if that person does not receive us, then we just simply shake the dust off our feet, and we keep moving, we go on in peace,

David Sandstrom 21:27

That brings up a very important aspect to forgiveness. And that in that it is always unilateral. Some people might say, well, he doesn't deserve it. Why should I give it to him? Or but as you said earlier, that person might not even be aware that they wronged you. Yes. And here you are suffering inner turmoil, turmoil because of it. So you might say, well, they don't deserve it. So why should I give it to? Well, it's a good thing. God doesn't treat us that way. Right?

Aleechea Pitts 21:53

Absolutely.

Aleechea Pitts 21:54

Because forgiveness always goes to the deserving every time it goes to the undeserving. Yes. And it's not something that we've earned. But because he's a good father to us. You know, he always goes to the extent to win us back unto themselves, even to the point. And I just taught this, I

talked about forgiveness wins on on this past Sunday. And I talked about how, while he was on the cross being crucified, he had been pierced and inside. When he asked for something to drink, they gave him vinegar to drink. You know, they're hurling these insults. And yet, while he is up there on the cross being crucified, he had enough strength to say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Yeah, you know, in the midst of all of that, what what? Yeah, as the scripture says, while we were yet sinners, C hrist died for us.

David Sandstrom 22:51
Yeah.

Aleechea Pitts 22:51
And, and, and that alone is just so so powerful, because this was not something that we earned. But because of, you know, God is love, he will always he always tries to win us back unto himself. And he went to that fullest extent, by giving up, you know, his his only son, he gave up his only son that in his death, we could live.

David Sandstrom 23:16
Yes. Amen. Aleechia, what would you say to somebody that says, Well, okay, I get it. I understand. I don't want to drinking the poison myself, I get all that. But I'll forgive them when they asked me to forgive when they come and apologize. That's when I'll forgive. What would you say to that person?

Aleechea Pitts 23:34
I would say to that person, you may not never get the apology.

David Sandstrom 23:37
Mm hmm.

Aleechea Pitts 23:38
And this is why it is important that you let it go for your sake, to forgive. It's something that you said, you talked about drinking that the deadly poison hoping somebody else dropped dead, and you'd be the one that dropped dead. Is this is the same premise, because of the simple fact with forgiveness. People they sleep in at night during this hour, like to say they're not studying you. You know. And so again, it is for you, that you free yourself. So you can be in in a healthy place. Because here it is, again,

by you holding on to unforgiveness. Your prayers are not even being heard at this point. Yeah, you know, and I don't know about you, David, but nobody is that important. You know, I want my prayers to be heard. When I pray, I want God to answer me. I want him to hear me. And that's one of the clear scriptures. He says, When you stand praying, forgive Mark 11:25. When you stand praying, forgive, so that is, like I said, it's too many components. You know, you want forgiveness, you got to forgive, it's conditional. So here it is. God is telling us to do something that is going to benefit us it's not going to hurt us is going to benefit us. And this is what I always tell people. God Can deal with an individual better than you can. But when you begin to put your hands and everything, God begins to step back and say, okay, since you can do it, I'm gonna step back.

David Sandstrom 25:10
Yeah.

Aleechea Pitts 25:10

But God can deal with that individual better than you can and even the Bible, he says, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. And I encourage my brothers and my sisters that are listening on today. Let God handle it. And you walk in freedom, there is a freedom in forgiveness. There is a there's a there's a freedom that comes with forgiving, and let God handle your offenders that the Bible says that we are to bless those that curse us. Right? We are to do good to them do good to our enemies, because God knows how to settle up, but he can't settle up. If you start acting in unrighteousness, and just doing different things, let God handle it. And you just begin to work on work on you. Even even if you're stuck with how you're feeling, you have to make a choice. And as I said, you keep continuing to choose to forgive until your feelings match up to your choice.

David Sandstrom 26:10

Well, you know, I think that's a great point we should and, you know, on this idea of sometimes we think that we're somehow punishing that person by withholding forgiveness. They may not even know they did anything wrong to us anything hurtful, right? They may even be deceased.

Aleechea Pitts 26:25
Yeah.

David Sandstrom 26:25

We can still forgive. Because it's unilateral. And it's for our sakes, yes. No, it's a huge thing. It's a really huge topic that I think I think a lot of people going to get a lot out of this conversation because this is something we all need to practice. No one's exempt from this.

Aleechea Pitts 26:41

Right. And and I even put out a disclaimer on it on yesterday, I said in Kingdom living, forgiveness wins. This is something it's a part of the Christian lifestyle. When the apostles, when the disciples they asked Jesus, they said, How many times should we give three times and they thought three times it was a good number, right? Based on Jewish law tradition back then. And Jesus responds and says 70 times seven, which means as many times as it takes, because I look at my own life, there's times I ask God to forgive me for the same thing.

David Sandstrom 27:17

Yeah, and in other words, there's no end to it. Right? There's I mean, seven is the number of completion or perfection in the Bible. So I think what Jesus is teaching there is until it works, yes. Yeah. Until you get it right. Yeah, you know, that's, that's when you do it. You don't put a number on this. Now, you just this is a practice, you keep doing this.

Aleechea Pitts 27:34

I know, and I and I even mentioned, I said, if you look at forgiveness, it almost goes along in line with repentance. When you repent, you turn and you're going the right direction. And so if we would conduct ourselves as we should, we won't find ourselves asking for forgiveness so much, when we are dealing with one another. If we would just stop and think before we say or do anything, then that will lessen the times we will have to ask someone to forgive us or to say, I'm sorry, because a lot of people have a problem with that, too. They haven't. Because the truth of the matter is, the Bible says we have all offended in Word Indeed, we all said things that we shouldn't have said we've all done things that we should not have done. And so there's that flip side of the coin to where there's some things we think we've pulled Oh, do you need to ask people to forgive you for?

David Sandstrom 28:28

Yeah, you know, I think it's important to add to this that I think it's holding a lot of people back some some people back is that they say, Well, if I

forgive, then they're just going to keep on doing it to me, and then I'm going to become a doormat. So you know, I'm not going to withhold forgiveness. But that's a lie, right? Hey, there might be some boundaries that need to be established.

Aleechea Pitts 28:47
Absolutely.

David Sandstrom 28:47
In there, you know, that person might have committed something illegal, there might be some legal consequences to what this person has done. We have to follow up on that we hold people accountable, and we don't become doormats. But we forgive for the sake of enjoying the supernatural peace that's offered us.

Aleechea Pitts 29:03
Yes.

David Sandstrom 29:04
I want to close with the with a quote from Mark Twain. And he said "Forgiveness is the fragrance the Rose gives off to the heel that crushed it".

Aleechea Pitts 29:14
Mm hmm.

David Sandstrom 29:15
Isn't that great?

Aleechea Pitts 29:15
Mm hmm.

David Sandstrom 29:16
Love it. Mark Twain. Do you have anything else to add? Aleechia?

Aleechea Pitts 29:21
The only thing that I will add is that Jesus said that I've come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly. He said apart from me, you can do nothing. So God, He wants you to be free. He wants you to live in wholeness. He wants you to be healthy, and mind body and

so but the thing is, he's given us the instructions. If we don't follow his instructions and don't follow his directions, we can only for ourselves, but God has given us a resource such as this, this podcast. Such as, through this man of God, David, and I and other people that are they are giving you the template of what you need to do, to walk in wholeness to be to be healthy in mind, body and soul. And so it's not going to work unless you apply. It always say this knowledge applied equals wisdom, we have another lot of knowledge. But if you don't apply that knowledge, it's like a computer storing up information not being used.

David Sandstrom 30:31

Yep. No knowledge, or lack of knowledge and failure to act on knowledge have the same result.

Aleechea Pitts 30:38

Yes

David Sandstrom 30:39

Yeah. Well, Alicia, thank you so much for coming on the show. I really, really enjoyed this conversation.

Aleechea Pitts 30:44

Same here. Thank you for having me on once again.

David Sandstrom 30:47

All right, you take care. Well, I hope you enjoyed that episode with Alicia Pitts. She's a woman of God. And she's got a lot of wisdom to share. I'm guessing that there's somebody that listened to this episode, that has something in their life that they need to let go of. We've all been wronged by people at some point in our lives, people that should have been loving us and hurt us instead. It might have been yesterday. It might have been last week. Maybe it was 20 years ago, and it's still affecting us today. What they did was hurtful. But for our own sakes, we need to let it go. You see, we think we're somehow punishing our offender by not offering forgiveness. But here's the problem. They're probably not losing sleep over it; we are. There's an old saying that goes. Today, I set a prisoner free. And I found out that the prisoner was me. When we withhold forgiveness, it can lead to toxic emotions like resentment, bitterness, even anger and rage. We don't call these toxic emotions for nothing. They're harmful to our health. So, for our own sakes, for the vitality of our spirit, mind and body,

we need to do the tough work, we need to do the forgiving. Jesus wants to set us free. But we can't be set free if we're not willing to do the work necessary to move forward. Forgiveness is like crossing the monkey bars. In order to grab a hold of the bar in front of us, we need to let go of the bar behind. That's how we move forward by letting go of the past. Now, understandably, this process can be very difficult. I encourage you to go to my website, DavidSandstrom.com. This is episode number 22. Go to the show notes. And you can download a free chapter on forgiveness from my book "The Christians Guide to Holistic Health". In that chapter, I've got an exercise on forgiveness. And with the help of the Holy Spirit, that exercise will guide you through the process of effectively forgiving your offender and moving forward in wholeness. So I really encourage you to avail yourself to that free resource. Don't forget, I always post a full transcript of the episode in the show notes on my website, DavidSandstrom.com, you can read it online or download it, put it on your device, take it with you and read it later. If you haven't already, I encourage you to go to your favorite podcast listening platform and subscribe to the podcast. This is called Holistic Health Matters. subscribing is always free and that way you won't miss an episode. That's it for now. Once again, I enjoyed serving you. I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed