

How does one deal with the knowledge that their mistake, their sin, was responsible for the death of their child?

For 21 years, my way has not been very effective. The pain and shame of my abortion has sought to destroy me. Although I had asked God to forgive me countless times, I would ask again! Sometimes I would correct myself by thanking God for His forgiveness and pray that He would help me feel forgiven. I knew the right things to say. I made the choice to forgive myself and to forgive others for their involvement. Still there was no peace, no closure, only a wound that never healed.

My Defense

Denial became my defense mechanism without even being aware of it. My pastor has often used the illustration of denial being equal to trying to hold several balloons under water. It's impossible and it's exhausting! If I denied my sin I am not aware of it. I believed it was the pain I could not face. I kept trying not to think about it, trying not to feel it, pushing it down again, if only for a little while. Occasionally I would share a small portion of what I found difficult to put into words with someone to whom I felt close. These times were rare because constantly seeking forgiveness and running from the pain kept me busy.

Until last fall, I was unaware I had another option. The option of a Post Abortion Recovery Counseling Ministry offered through the Crisis Pregnancy Center. I was not convinced but considered the possibility I needed it. Why should I need counseling? Was my faith not strong enough? I had given my life to the Lord 17 years ago and I knew I was forgiven. Why could I not forgive myself?

I decided to swallow my pride and admit that I might need help. I called the Center and began counseling in January and finished the end of April. It has been a difficult journey, but a necessary one. I did not want to feel the pain. I just wanted to get to the other side of it. God knew the only way to get to the other side was to walk me straight through the center of it! I feared it might destroy me, but God would not allow that.

I am grateful for this ministry and those involved in it. They work diligently to prevent abortion and just as faithfully to share the healing power of Christ Jesus with those who have suffered as a result of them. My counselor became a friend instantly and I recognized her as a gift from the Lord and a guide for my healing journey.

I thank God for blessing me with a loving and supportive family. They wanted desperately to help me. They suffered because I suffered.

Most of all I am grateful to my Lord and Savior who saved me according to His deeds and righteousness, not my own. I am beginning to walk in freedom from pain, guilt and shame. God has made this possible.

In my first counseling session, I said through tears "I'm afraid God will want me to use this experience for His Glory and it is so painful. I do not know if I can. The instant I said the words, I felt God touch me and remove that fear. I was certain something miraculous had just happened that would specifically enable me to do exactly that.

God removed my fear of being able to share this with whomever He desires. Without a doubt I knew I would be called upon to testify of His mercy and His grace when the time was right. May I be found faithful.

Brenda Heworth

This testimony was written by a participant in the CPC Post-Abortion Recovery Program using Victims Of Choice 10 step Post-Abortion Recovery Program "My Abortion Grief, Guilt and Shame is Ending Soon".