

TWENTY-TWO

ABANDONMENT

By Samone Darden

I woke up one morning and sent my pastor's wife an email wanting to know if it would be okay in God's eyes to divorce my husband and not solely make a decision based upon my emotions. My church already knew my situation, my story and my experiences with my ex-husband. I was faced with a dilemma and one question bombarded my mind. "What should I do?" Her response was simply, "Samone, you have been abandoned. Your husband left you without warning."

a·ban·don—*1. to leave completely and finally; forsake utterly; desert: to abandon one's farm; to abandon a child; to abandon a sinking ship. 2. to give up; discontinue; withdraw from: to abandon a research project; to abandon hopes for a stage career. 3. to give up the control of: to abandon a city to an enemy army. 4. to yield (oneself) without restraint or moderation; give (oneself) over to natural impulses, usually without self-control: to abandon oneself to grief. 5. Law. to cast away, leave, or desert, as property or a child. (Dictionary.com)*

“So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you.

He will neither fail you nor abandon you.”

—Deuteronomy 31:6, New Living Translation

“Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close.”

—Psalm 27:10, New Living Translation

Although many words were said to me in the conversation with my pastor’s wife, that word *abandoned* was burned into my heart for a long time. It was not until that conversation with my pastor’s wife did truth come to me about what had happened to me. Not only did he commit adultery, but he left me without warning or explanation. He simply left without an email, voice message, or letter. Once again the feeling of abandonment set in because of the selfish actions of someone I sincerely loved and believed loved me in return. I remember the coldness of my spirit, the feelings of numbness and anger; then the tears fell once anger and numbness expired. In the midst of my emotions, God still spoke to me about restoration, but God’s words conflicted with the painful reality. For my relationship to be restored, it would require the willing participation of both partners.

But based on my ex-husband’s actions and obvious choices, it would seem restoration wasn’t going to happen; at least not with our marriage and not in the ways interpreted by God. Soon after, divorce papers were filed and freedom was granted to escape this emotionally traumatic union. But even though papers were filed presenting my freedom from this situation, much of my pain remained dormant and active in my heart preventing me from loving freely. The feelings of betrayal and abandonment were swept under the rug, along with many

other issues, for years. I've learned that sweeping issues under the rug prevents true growth and blocks spiritual freedom. Like so many of us, never would I have guessed that what I had been suffering from for many years was entitled, "Abandonment."

Understanding Abandonment Patterns and Origins

To break any pattern in our lives, we must face ourselves on a deeper level, even levels that involve looking back into the infancy stages of our lives. While on your journey to heal, there must be an acknowledgment about emotional issues originating from sources of much deeper pain. Abandonment mainly stems from childhood and in my childhood not knowing my father created the catalyst for feeling abandoned. My memories of my father were based on conversations with him over the phone, sharing promises that were never fulfilled; empty promises of birthday plans and deliveries of gifts that just never manifested. When the time presented itself to meet him, it resulted in disaster from not knowing his function as a father or my role as a daughter. Greeting him became challenging. Was I supposed to call him "Dad" or "John"? I wasn't sure how to interact with this man who was supposed to be my father.

Later on in my childhood, the disappearance of my step father, who relocated to California without any notice or warning, also pierced my heart; another notch in the belt of feeling abandoned by others. Or for instance, my mother verbalized every moment humorously that she wanted a boy. Even in humor her words were disturbing. At times my mother gave me the impression that she really didn't want me, or wished I had been a boy. During my childhood my grandmother planted her love in my heart. My grandmother was my greatest love

and seeing her leave this Earth was one of the toughest things I've experienced. Even experiencing the death of a family member or friend can stir up emotions of abandonment. Staring at her casket during her funeral crushed me emotionally and only intensified my feelings of abandonment. Throughout my childhood, abandonment continued to distort my perspective on relationships, love, and connections with others. My relationship with God, however, brought me to a road of healing. Healing from those who didn't see value in our connection, left my life through natural causes, or just never expressed their love to me in a manner in which I could have understood.

Facing Child Abandonment Issues

Many of us during childhood were verbally or physically abused and worse. Some had to live with the reality of having absentee parents. A resource that was informative in learning more about childhood abandonment issues was a behavioral science textbook supplied to students at Full Sail University. It concluded that the infant stages of humans present the initial opportunity to build trust with others. "Infants are delivered into the world with fundamental physiological needs. Their caregivers must be willing and able to satisfy these requirements. Trust at its most basic level arises when an infant can sense that its parents can be depended upon for fulfillment of its needs. If trust is developed successfully, the child acquires confidence and security in the world, and retains this underlying sense of stability, even when posed with a threat."

Due to my lack of positive experiences, these facts present truth to my struggles. What my situations have taught is that trusting or mistrusting others is learned through social conditions and parenting.