

# FORGIVENESS

## by Corrie ten Boom

Corrie ten Boom once wrote of how she was not able to forget a wrong that had been done to her. She had forgiven the person, but she kept rehashing the incident and so, couldn't sleep. Finally Corrie cried out to God for help in putting the problem to rest. "His help came in the form of a kindly Lutheran pastor," Corrie wrote, "to whom I confessed my failure after two sleepless weeks. 'Up in that church tower,' he said, nodding out the window, 'is a bell which is rung by pulling on a rope. But you know what? After the sexton lets go of the rope, the bell keeps on swinging. First ding, then dong. Slower and slower until there's a final dong and it stops. I believe the same thing is true of forgiveness. When we forgive, we take our hand off the rope. But if we've been tugging at our grievances for a long time, we mustn't be surprised if the old angry thoughts keep coming for a while. They're just the ding-dong's of the old bell slowing down.'

"And so it proved to be. There were a few more midnight reverberations, a couple of dings when the subject came up in my conversations. But the force – which was my willingness in the matter – had gone out of them. They came less and less often and at last stopped altogether. And so I discovered another secret of forgiveness – we can trust God not only above our emotions, but also above our thoughts."

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