

Forgiveness.

Firing myself from carrying the load of the false responsibility to hold on to someone's debt.

That is what I've been contemplating about the last couple of days. I am fired. Fired from being the judge. Fired from being the prosecutor. Because I am fired from being the accused.

I can mention many things that could withhold me from forgiving. And that is, to be honest, a part of my character that God wanted to break: unforgiving, revengeful, hostile. I always thought: "Just wait a little, I'll get you even harder than you got me. I'll have my justice done, in any way, but it will happen." God addressed me about that almost four years ago. In those years I've had some valuable lessons. People that disappointed me in friendships (for instance by using my services instead of loving me for who I am). My response to these situations said a lot about me. The dark side of my character was revealed to me and probably to others. Being the judge. Making the judgment myself. Putting someone on the stand. Condemning that person to...my punishment. Of course I knew about Jesus' clear commandment to forgive. And that I could be free. But I did not accept it. Knowing and accepting, two different things I can say.

Bit by bit brokenness came. Brokenness. Painful, but very healthy at the same time. Instead of foolishly holding on to my pain I learned to see things from another perspective. What perspective?

God brought me into these painful situations. It was His plan for me that I would suffer. He wanted it. With a purpose. But it was His will. Sounds black and white, but Biblical. Josef, Jesus, two examples of situations where God allowed, no had planned that they would walk a certain road of suffering. Jesus is the best example to refer to (like He is in more things). Before this world came into existence God had already decided to let His Son die on the cross. He has even defined the details of this road of suffering (the example of the dividing of His clothes). To elaborate on that, his whole life was filled with learning through suffering. Obedience to His parents even though they didn't fully understand Him. Imagine Jesus on a hot summer day with splinters in His hands, soaking in sweat, working hard. Would He not be tempted to think: "Am I really God's Son? Will I fulfil God's purpose for my life?" He was shaped throughout his whole life. Suffering to shape Him, even Jesus...in Hebrews we read more about that.

In summation: suffering in life is given¹ by God. Back to the subject of forgiveness. With this knowledge about suffering I can look in a different way at what others have done to me. That is: "What does He want to change in me, what does He want to teach me, what does He want to give to me?" Wisdom, insight, change of character. I am not saying that it was right what they did (not justifying anything). Not at all. That is not forgiving, that is lying. But I fire myself from being the judge or prosecutor. I let God judge. He alone can do that. And if people do not acknowledge they were wrong (if I'd confront them with what they did) and if they do not want to receive forgiveness, that is their problem, not mine. My responsibility is to forgive them and to do that as far as I am involved. If someone doesn't accept it (for instance by denying what happened or by justifying it), then it's his/her problem. Like I said in one of my poems:

Forgiveness is mine.
But the problem is yours.
I hope you'll align.
To a less selfish course.

Forgiveness.
Keeping myself in the freedom God gave me based on His mercy.

David.

¹ With "given" I mean: He works His sovereign will through these evil things (Romans 8:28). He allows evil to exist for His purposes (purposes I do not understand). I do not say that He causes people to sin, for God is not the author of sin.