

FORGIVE ME, MUM AND DAD

Why did God want Brian to forgive the parents who had wronged him?

The train was due in a few hours. Young Brian Williams sneaked away to lock himself in the toilet. His parents couldn't get him to budge so they put the garden hose in the small louvre window and sprayed him with cold water.

After an hour, cold and shivering, Brian gave up and came out of the toilet. His parents sent him back to the auntie they'd given him away to. The only one of the five children to be sent away, Brian couldn't understand why his parents didn't seem to want him. He was too young to understand that his mother was suffering post-natal depression with three children aged six and younger.



As told by John Subritzky of Promise Keepers

Brian suffered chronic homesickness for the three years he was separated from his family. He felt rejected and cried constantly and as a result was teased and bullied at school. This became a deep emotional trauma.

At 11 years of age he was reunited with his family and they moved from Te Rapa to Auckland.

Brian's Dad worked in the Air Force and was often absent. As a result Brian never really developed a relationship with his dad. Instead he was left with resentment. In his rejection he rebelled, not wanting to listen to his parents, not wanting to obey or honour them.

When Brian married and started his own family, this life experience had a horrendous effect on them. He was still suffering the after effects of childhood rejection, avoiding conflict with those close to him and acting aggressively towards those he did not know.

In 1980, when Brian was 28, he became a Christian. He describes it as God putting a warm blanket of love around his shoulders. Christ came into his life in the area of his deepest need, showing him love instead of rejection. From then on his life was a process of transformation. Through reading the Bible and praying, God revealed the areas of Brian's life that needed dealing with. After about six years, it was as if Jesus shone a light

on the issue of Brian's parents.

God told Brian to go and ask his parents' forgiveness for the way he had behaved toward them when he was a teenager. At first he got angry with God. *Why should he apologise? It was his parents who had wronged him!*

After Brian settled down a little he decided to do what God asked. He drove south to where his parents were now living. He walked in and told them that God had said he needed to put things right. He told them how he had felt resentment, bitterness and rejection.

For the first time, Brian heard the reason why he had been sent away—that it wasn't his fault, it was just that his mum was severely depressed and couldn't cope.

That was in the late 1980s and Brian's dad has now passed away. I heard Brian's story when he was helping run seminars at Promise Keepers. A discussion about relationships with fathers brought the emotions to the top again. Brian stood at the lectern ready to speak but instead wept great tears in front of the men in that place.

God has done a healing work in his heart but he still feels things deeply, and this makes him a better and stronger man, husband and father. Today Brian and wife Brenda have four children and six grandchildren.

Brian couldn't understand why his parents didn't seem to want him and why they were sending him away
