

## A Bath of Forgiveness

The story is told about a traveler making his way with a guide through the jungles of Burma. They came to a shallow but wide river and waded through it to the other side. When the traveler came out of the river, numerous leeches had attached to his torso and legs. His first impulse was to grab them and pull them off.

The guide stopped him, however, warning that pulling the leeches off would only leave tiny pieces of them under the skin. Eventually, infection would set in and cause serious problems.

The best way to rid the body of the leeches, the guide advised, was to soak in a warm balsam bath for several minutes. This would affect the leeches, and soon they would release their hold on the man's body.

This story provides a valuable lesson in human relations. When we have been significantly injured by another person, we cannot simply yank the hurt from ourselves and expect that all bitterness, malice and emotion will be gone. Resentment still hides under the surface.

The only way to become truly free of the offense and to forgive others is to allow the soothing bath of God's forgiveness of us to wash over us.

When we finally fathom the extent of God's love in Jesus Christ, forgiveness of others is a natural outflow.

--Beecher Hunter