



One Simple Step

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Every year we gathered at my in-laws' house for Christmas. Crystal goblets and matching china made the table sparkle. Delicious aromas made our mouths water and the conversations always made us smile.

One particular year, as we relaxed and tried to make room for dessert, I was handed a beautiful box wrapped with a white satin bow. The tag read, "Merry Christmas. Love, your Niece."

I nside the box was a delicate, pink, pinecone, Christmas ornament. As I gently rolled it in the palm of my hand, words began resonating from the living room. "Congratulations!" "When are you due?" "You're having a girl? That's so exciting!"

I sat frozen as this news slowly registered in my heart. My sister-in-law was pregnant. My problem was that I was not.

I wanted to scream!

Other than my husband, no one in the room knew that just two days prior I had endured yet another infertility procedure. Our family was oblivious to the crushed hopes, endless doctor visits, and my difficulty in swallowing the doctor's repeated statement, "There's no physical reason why you aren't getting pregnant."

Therefore, I had concluded God didn't want me to have children.

Crumbling inside, I struggled through the rest of the evening, trying to appear happy and excited for this new promise of life. But ... all I wanted to do was to run home and drown in my own self-pity. Pain incapacitated me, and my brokenness consumed my very being.

Something had to change. I was drowning in a pit of heartache and despair. I needed to open my hands that were filled with disappointment and allow myself to grab hold of God's rock-solid promises. I needed to believe His Word — the very same Word I professed to others who were broken — and trust His love for me. I asked God to help me to cast away my pain and walk in love.

This began by taking one simple step.

I bought my niece a gift. I don't even remember what it was. What I do remember is that as I handed this gift to my sister-in-law, I felt a physical release of the pain that was weighing me down. Disappointment and anger fell away, allowing my soul to be filled with joy! The more love I allowed myself to show towards my niece, the more excitement I felt in anticipation of her birth.

God and I had many conversations throughout the following months. The untangling of my many different emotions was a very difficult and painful process. But, as with anything of great value, every moment of my healing journey was worth it.

If you find yourself holding on to pain or disappointment, I strongly encourage you to trust God's love for you and to take your first step toward healing. While the journey may be arduous, the healing will be priceless! *Q*