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## **As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us**

Forgiveness is the greatest gift God gave us as sinners. Jesus Christ suffered and died to forgive us of our sins. We need to remember this when someone else hurts us with the things they say or do.

I recently saw the new movie, "I Can Only Imagine." It's the story of the hit Christian Rock song which topped charts as a crossover song in both Rock and Country music. The band, MercyMe, sold 2.5 million albums. The story is of a man named Bart Millard, who was terribly abused by his father as a child. Then his father, Arthur, started dying of cancer and turned to the Lord. It was hard but Bart forgave his dad and went on to write one of the most popular songs of all time.

The ability to forgive releases us from the pain in our hearts and souls which we hold on to when we stay angry. Keeping this animosity is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. When we hate it's like having tar covering our hearts. Some people feel they can't forgive because the harm which was done is unforgivable. We don't forgive so the other person can have peace, we do it so we can be free from the resentment and the darkness of our souls. We need to forgive even when the other person doesn't say they're sorry. Sometimes the hardest person to forgive is ourselves.

We need to forgive but we don't have to forget. When someone continues to harm us we need boundaries, not walls. We need to be strong and stand up for ourselves when a behavior is unacceptable. We need to be able to protect ourselves and those we love.

Forgiveness is a gift God gives us which leads to our happiness, peace and serenity. Sometimes the person who has injured us has already passed on. They can still be forgiven. What some people do is write a letter and go to the gravesite to read it. This is very powerful.

When we learn to forgive, especially when it's hard, we become the kind of Christians God wants us to be.