

JOSEPH



His hand was thrust out to shake mine. And I, who preached so often to the people in Bloemendaal the need to forgive, kept my hand at my side.

Even as the angry, vengeful thoughts boiled through me, I saw the sin of them. Jesus Christ had died for this man; was I going to ask for more?

Lord Jesus, I prayed, forgive me and help me to forgive him.

I tried to smile, I struggled to raise my hand. I could not. I felt nothing, not the slightest spark of warmth or charity. And so again I breathed a silent prayer. Jesus, I cannot forgive him. Give me your forgiveness.

As I took his hand the most incredible thing happened. From my shoulder along my arm and through my hand a current seemed to pass from me to him, while into my heart sprang a love for this stranger that almost overwhelmed me.

And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world's healing hinges, but on his. When he tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself.

what if...

1. God's forgiveness is final

Truths from Hebrews 10 to help deal with our doubts...

1. Christ's sacrifice for our salvation was once and for all (10).
2. Christ has dealt with our sin (11-12).
3. Christ has given us acceptance before God (12).
4. Christ has defeated Satan (13).
5. Christ makes us perfect (14).
6. The Holy Spirit bears witness (15).
7. God says our forgiveness is final (17).

1. God's forgiveness is final
2. Vengeance belongs to the Lord

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "**Vengeance is mine**, I will repay," says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

Romans 12:19-20

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **as God in Christ forgave you.**

Ephesians 4:31-32

Forgiven sinners forgive sinners.

When you refuse to give, you are saying...

To the unbeliever, an eternity in hell is not a good enough punishment.

To the believer, the humiliation and death of Jesus was not good enough.

1. God's forgiveness is final
2. Vengeance belongs to the Lord
3. God has a purpose for everything



Jesus is coming back,
and all of history is moving toward that end.

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