

Easier Said Than Done

by Mike Tucker *

During the Holocaust, countless children were exterminated at the Ravensbruck concentration camp. When the camp was liberated, a note, written by an unknown prisoner, was found on the body of a dead child.

"O Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will, but also those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us -- remember instead the fruits we have bought, thanks to this suffering: our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this. And when those who have inflicted suffering on us come to judgment, let all the fruits which we have borne be their forgiveness." [From "The Hidden Jesus" by Donald Spoto]

Sound familiar? How about the words spoken by Jesus on the Cross? "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)

Or, what about Stephen's prayer when he was martyred? "Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.'" (Acts 7:60)

Compared to these offences the things we endure are comparatively minor, and yet, if you're like me, there are times when forgiveness is still very difficult. It feels so much better, at least for a while, to hold the grudge and wallow in our bitterness.

Still, we are called to a life of forgiveness. As Christians, we only have one option. We only have the option of forgiveness. Easier said than done!

Remember that we will never be more like Jesus, we'll never be more holy, than when we say, "Lord, do not hold this against them...Father, forgive them."

With Love
Mike

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