



Forgiveness Sets Me Free

October 15, 2006, the phone shook me from my sleep at five thirty am,

I received a call, which roused and changed our lives forever.

This was a dreaded call, we as parents, had hoped never to receive.

A cold-blooded gang member had murdered our adult daughter.

I fell to the floor with searing agony;

Gushes of tears formed a puddle.

The Bloods gang initiated her into their group, innocently, at



thirteen.

She being naive was unaware of a thug's deceptive and enticing scheme.

She made a teenage decision with no idea of being lured into a trap.

Like a spider to a fly, they wove a tempting web; she was their prize.

From age thirteen to thirty, these thugs interwove their lives with hers.

They wreaked havoc and destruction in these eighteen years of her life,

She became a young mother of two daughters, which only knew the ache.



Where was God while all of these events were playing out in life's theme?

He was there, still in control, yet He will not force humans to choose Him.

Man's will is free to make choices to love or do harm, payment will come.

Sometimes it comes while on this Earth, other times not until Eternity.

No matter which way these thugs will pay, I will trust God completely.

Six months before her death, God sent me a woman to pray earnestly,

Each week we met, intense prayers of sincerity went up for her release.

He knew I needed prayer support to help me later forgive these criminals.

We cried, “Break her out of her bars of iron and smash the evil gates.
Set her free God. Release her from these horrible prison bars of pain.”
When the call informed me of her death, I could not understand. I said,
“God, I asked you to break her out of her iron bars and smash the gates?”
Through my river of tears and anguish, I heard a small loving impression.



“My child, I did as you asked. She is free from the iron hand of violence.
Your daughter is with Me—free without a life sentence of endless pain.
Believe My Word and chose the hard thing, chose to forgive this man.”
With a surrendered heart, I read the scriptures on forgiveness.
I chose to forgive this murderer, release him to God’s plan.
“Get justice for me from my enemies,” I cried to God about this loss.
I could ask that God will bring justice and search this murderer out.
Draw his heart towards the path of God’s love and salvation.

The nature of the offense big or small or the severity of it, mattered not,
As I made the choice to let go of all offenses and forgive them completely;
Not only the thug that murdered her, but also the other thugs involved.

I am now free inside of my emotions. I see these thugs in a different light.
They are in God's hand of justice; I am free of hate, bitterness, and revenge.
This allowed me to let go and grieve through our daughter's great loss.



Forgiveness washed my heart clean; love and hope lives in my spirit.
It's been nearly nine years later, I miss my daughter each passing day,
Yet I know I will see her one day. My heart's full of love and mercy,
For others who suffer life's atrocities. I see life through clear lenses.

I have realized...Forgiveness doesn't set the other person free.
I am the prisoner until I choose to forgive every painful offense
In addition, be willing to let the pain go.
God broke the chains from believing Satan's lies of thinking I am
Letting each of them off the hook.
There is no situation too horrific, which I cannot choose to forgive.
God gave me the strong grace to make the choice to
Not only forgive but to stay free of all offenses.

Matthew 6:14-15, Ephesians 4:26-27, Hebrews 12:15, 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 4: 1,

32, Romans 12:14-18, Colossians 3: 12-14.

© Written by Jean Johnson, Marie's Mother.

RIP.... Marie 6/19/1976—10/15/2006

