



## BECKY ERNEST

In the devotional, *Jesus Calling*, Sarah Young describes hardships as something that Jesus metes out carefully, in the right dosage and with tenderness. She calls afflictions some of Jesus' most favored gifts. In years past I might've read that and in my head agreed but in my heart said that I could do without having my little boat rocked, thank you very much!

But for the past 2 1/2 years, we have been under a legal situation that has changed how I view hardships and the true meaning of forgiveness. I've learned a whole lot about my own very real need of a Savior! Possibly what I have to say is old news for you and for that, I am truly saddened by the things you've had to walk through. But for some of you, maybe these thoughts and reflections are new. So hang tight with me I tend to ramble.

Firstly, I am learning that if I keep repeating the details of what has happened, I stay stuck in that anger, anxiety, and injustice of the events. I guess its like a PTSD response. Because I want to live in Philippians 3:12-14 - "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." So I don't talk about the details anymore. I do still ask for prayer when the next depositions or other legal matters come up. But with the Lord's help, I'm not dwelling on it in the same way.

Secondly, I've come to appreciate the body of Christ on a whole deeper level. Hal and I have no experience with this kind of situation. We have desperately needed come-alongside Christians to support us and remind us of who we are in Christ. Our relationships with our family have also been strengthened as we especially prayed that the Lord would not allow this external pressure to divide us.

Thirdly, forgiveness is NOT a "one and done." I don't have to feel guilty when the anger bubbles back up. The blood of Jesus covers my feelings and emotions that I'm not yet able to face. (See - Lysa Terkeurst's - "Forgiving What You Can't Forget"). Because, as the situation doesn't seem to have an end in sight, I can know that God's timing is perfect. Romans 8:28 also has a whole new meaning in "All Things" means All Things.

I have so much more to say about biblical forgiveness and yet so much still to learn. Jesus forgave me of everything. With His help, I can forgive this as well.

I do want to add that this is by no means the most difficult thing we have ever walked through, it is just where we are right now. And on a far more important note, I've got a whole bunch of new pictures of our grand-baby Caroline!