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## FORGIVEN - Men At The Cross Devotional

JULY 25TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

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*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*

### VIDEO OF THE DAY

#### 2 Corinthians 2:9-10

*9The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven-if there was anything to forgive-I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake*

Riding up the chair lift in Park Cities, Utah with my 22-year-old friend, Emily, was a learning experience I won't soon forget. Emily is an energetic snowboarder who can run circles around this "gray-haired knuckle dragger" (as the young snowboarder crown terms old guys like me who enjoy racing these 160 cm mini sleds down the steep rocky mountain slopes).

The two-chair lift ride was a longest ride in Utah. It took the entire trip to give Emily sufficient time to tell me her emotional teenage-life story. At age 15, from what seemed like a model family, Emily's world shattered into small fragments when her mom announced that she was in love with the school music director and she'd be leaving home with all the furniture in the house and as much of the family's savings and income as she

could get her hands on.

In defense of her gentle-spirited forgiving father, Emily's rage towards her mom boiled inside of her. Her anger seemed unquenchable and the inner fire of hatred blazed hotter with each passing year as her mom took more and more from the family and re-invaded their home continually with painful intrusions and demands and new announcements of her "Dance with the Devil" and continuing extra-marital affair.

Then, five years later, this talented little athlete from West Virginia with a smile as beautiful as a Utah Rocky Mountain sunrise came to our sports camp to counsel our teenagers. With all of her talents and Christ-filled beauty, Emily also brought to camp a loaded suitcase of bitterness that was crippling her like an age old case of arthritis.

During staff training week as I spoke continually of God's amazing love for us and my boundless love for my wife and kids, the Holy Spirit purposely and mysteriously melted Emily's hard heart towards her mom and she forgave her completely for all the hurt she had lashed upon her five long years before. Like a mighty wall of water caged behind a huge concrete dam, God's greatest medicine, the healing power of forgiveness, was now released to flow into Emily's life and enable her to be truly well, truly whole and truly free.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Emily's sparkling eyes and contagious smile was the result of an unbridled, bitter-free heart. Why was the night of forgiveness so important in that smile?
2. Why does God demand that we forgive others as He forgives us?
3. Is there any speck of bitterness hidden in your heart that you need to deal with today?

### **LIFELINE:**

Forgiveness is God's greatest gift to you and your greatest gift to your family.

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