



A Lenten Mosaic - Living In Grace Lent 2020

**Devotion for Sunday,
March 1, 2020**

By Anna Anderson

I recently read a short birthday blog from someone who was talking about all the things she wanted to do in her next year. Looking at the upcoming year and reflecting back on the last one, she states some things she has learned and things she wants more of in the coming year. Things like more love, more honesty, more authenticity, more days off, more taking time for herself - that sort of thing. And in the list she also says she wants more forgiveness, even when it's hard and not earned. I began to think about "earned" forgiveness. I wonder if any of us is deserving of forgiveness because of what we have done.

I actually know the answer to that. We are not deserving of forgiveness. We have done nothing to earn it. And we can do nothing to make it happen in our lives. Is our forgiving others hard? Yes, it most always is. Is our forgiving ourselves harder? Yes, I believe it always is. There are times in my life when I have experienced forgiveness in a dramatic and vulnerable way that seemed immediate. More often, I think forgiveness is a path we walk on and more of a journey than a destination. But I know that I don't do anything to deserve God's mercy and grace, which enables me to forgive others, and also allows me to experience forgiveness in my own life. It is just freely given out of God's immense, immeasurable, vast, unconditional, and complete love for me.

One of the hymns I used to sing growing up in a Baptist church was *Grace Greater Than Our Sin*. The hymn writer talks about grace that exceeds our sin

and our guilt. Thank God for that! And God, in his infinite mercy acts out of who God is, not what we are. Because I don't know about you, but I really haven't done anything to "earn" God's forgiveness. And other people whom I find it especially hard to forgive? God hasn't equipped me with anything more special to extend to them other than the example he has shown me in my own life.

You can hear an audio version of *Grace Greater Than Our Sin* at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Je22nSpTZVQ>

(You may have to copy and paste the website link into your web browser.)

Daniel 9: 13

So listen, God, to this determined prayer of your servant. Have mercy on your ruined Sanctuary. Act out of who you are, not out of what we are.

From *The Message*

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, your mercy is for me. And for that, I am so profoundly grateful. When I am tempted to decide who deserves something and who does not, help me to remember that your remarkable love for me has no marks of qualifying, no record of my deeds, no remembrances of my own sin or guilt. Your grace is more than enough and I thank you for that. Through the power and the presence of your Holy Spirit I pray. Amen.