



Just an ordinary walk through the woods on a beautiful fall day, I look up and notice the sun streaming through the leaves of this common tree. I take a few photos and wait in anticipation to see what they will look like when I get home. Upon inspection, I was less than impressed with the photos. Normally, the photo would just fall through the cracks of my computer and quickly be forgotten. But, determined that I could find a "Keeper" in these photos, I took a second look and start to think outside the box.

This image is the result of my coloring outside the lines on my leaves photo (Maybe you can still see the sunlight steaming through the leaves if you look hard enough). I liked the fanciful interpretation of the interaction between sunlight, sky, leaves and color. I believed I made the best of a bad situation. Instead of banishing my photo into oblivion to be forgotten forever, I transformed it something no one had ever seen before. Instead of discarding it because it seemed too common, I created an original, simply by changing the way I looked at it. Now, I could not change my photos past, but I could change the way I looked at it, and in turn change the future of my photo.

As I began to reflect upon my new image trying to come up with some meaningful text to place upon it, it began to speak to me of forgiveness. It spoke of taking a past that is marred, flawed, and damaged and finding a way to transform it into something of beauty. One way to change your future is to change the way you look at the past. John Miller once said, "Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens. Circumstances and situations do color life, but you have been given the mind to choose what the color shall be".

When we forgive, we free ourselves from a life of slavery. And as we practice the work of forgiveness we discover more and more that forgiveness and healing are one. There is no torment like the inner torment of an unforgiving spirit. It refuses to be soothed, it refuses to be healed, and it refuses to forget. And at the end we find that we have missed the good things of life simply because we chose to cling to the putrid corpse of a grudge.

Set yourself free today. Forgive. Has somebody done you wrong? Let it go. Have you been beating yourself up over something you have done in the past? Forgive yourself and walk the walk of a free man. Enjoy the warm sunshine and freedom that forgiveness brings. What have you got to lose?

**Something to think about:**

- ❖ You must choose to forgive whoever has wronged you. Forgiveness is not an emotion; it is a decision of the will.
- ❖ Let us be first to give a friendship sign, to nod first, smile first, speak first, and if such a thing is necessary—forgive first.
- ❖ Don't carry a grudge. While you're carrying the grudge the other guy's out dancing.
- ❖ Life lived without forgiveness becomes a prison.

Help me change the future  
Rickey Moore