<u>The Power of Forgiveness</u>

My only son George asked if he could cut some grass with the new sit-down Toro mower we had just purchased. Privately, I thanked God that he asked. We are blessed with approximately five acres of grass to cut. This has to be done one or two times per week depending on the rainfall.

I agreed and made only one request: that he not cut the single wild flower currently growing over the septic tank. This was located in bare dirt at the drain and nearby to the pool. To me, that flower was beautiful. My neighbor Mr. Neal Mast, owner of Mast Greenhouse Inc., had an employee identify it for me. The only thing I can remember about it is that it will only bloom on a day that has at least ten hours of sunlight. Several hours later, I discovered that my dear son had indeed mowed it down. I decided not to say anything to him about it. While he continued to cut the back yard, I walked away through the garage. In my mind I thought: "I want a good relationship with my son at almost any cost."

I had been trying to grow that specific flower for several years. That was the first time that I had any success. That flower will grow in a bare spot and untouched by man. However, having grass is the more important thing. After all, when I purchased this farm some five years earlier it did look like a desert. On that day, I was feeling sick that I had lost the only flower on my property and in all the fifty-eight surrounding acres. (That is now the site of the Old Plank Road Trail, which at that time was in planning stages.) For my five years of effort, I desired to keep that one lonely flower and now it was gone.

As I was walking along, I forgave my son in my heart. This was only a minor thing after all. I passed by my "triangle": an area of weeds in the center of my asphalt driveway that is surrounded by 2,400 pounds of brown, crescent shaped garden bricks. Growing there were 700 of these wild flowers, all facing me and not the sun. They had never been there before and they have not been there since.