



## How He Loves Us

I'm always surprised at how music speaks to me. Its message is timeless and powerful enough to move the soul and ignite the spirit. One song in particular spoke to me and caused me to face something odious about myself.

This discovery took place while I was living in Asheville, NC and renting a room above a local inn. I was having such a difficult time living there; my landlord was determined to keep me under his thumb. To be honest he was very controlling and his words at times were quite cruel. To top it off the spiritual oppression in Asheville is quite intense and I am no stranger to spiritual warfare. This was beyond anything I had ever experienced...it was so heavy and overwhelming. I cried nearly every day I lived there.

The one bright spot during my stint in Asheville was

The Rock Church. Due to the selflessness of an extraordinary young lady, I was able to get a ride every Sunday to church. I was ever so grateful as it was my only light in such a dark place. Even now as I think of what it was like living there still brings tears to my eyes.

One night at a Connect group at The Rock Church called Worship League; a video was played of Kim Walker performing How He Loves Us. At this point I had never heard this song or even of Kim Walker. As I listened to the music and focused on the words the presence of God was so strong that I just broke. I knew at that point in all my years of being a Christian I did not know the love of God that she sang about in this song. My heart was stricken with grief as I longed to encounter that kind of love from Him.

The next morning that song was still on my heart and the tears continued to flow. I began to seek the Lord for the answer as to why, why had I not experienced His love like this in my relationship with Him. The answer to my prayer was words I will never forget. He said, 'You see how your landlord treats you? How he talks to you? This is how you treat yourself, Jen.' I fell on my knees and just sobbed uncontrollably. My landlord was the mirror to show me my true self and an ugly truth it was indeed. His spitefulness was the cruelty I had shown to myself.

So of course my question to the Lord was what is the cause of this malice I have toward myself? His answer was hard: you have terrible unforgiveness toward yourself and because you cannot forgive yourself, my love cannot penetrate the wall you have built around your heart. I wept aloud at this bitter revelation. However I knew what I had to do and it was one of the hardest things I have ever done in my life. I had to forgive myself. I had to say those words aloud, "I forgive myself." I also had to say that I loved myself. It was so hard to get these words out of my mouth. I choked on them several times before they actually escaped my lips. I also repented before the Lord for the loathsome way I had treated myself and for holding such ought against me.

After I finally spoke those words of forgiveness and repented before the Lord, I encountered the love of God in a way I had never had before this moment. For two hours I sat enveloped in His love. It felt like a warm blanket being wrapped around me on a cold day. I experienced such a security in this amazing love that if the whole world blew up around me I could have cared less. I had finally experienced that love Kim Walker was singing about, Oh How He Loves Us!