

A Cause and A Cure  
For Unanswered Prayer  
And  
Blessings  
Not Received

*Gerald Davis D.D.*



**“Dr. Gerald Davis has written a masterpiece from the wisdom of God. This work reminds me of King Josiah, who uncovered the Word of the Lord and led his nation into a great revival and season of plenty.”**

*Katheryn Freeberg, Editor–Vision-Quest Publishing*

**“...this book will help people. I am glad God is a God of a second chance.”**

*Dodie Osteen–Lakewood Church*

**“Gerald has given the church a look at a very important truth that can really save some lives.”**

*Glen Stead, Founder–Prince Albert Family Church*

**“...can’t wait to have it in our church bookstore—thought provoking and challenging.”**

*Tony Krishack, Senior Pastor–Victory Christian Center*

**“...a very rational and logical discourse on the consequences of integrity—a GEM of a revelation.”**

*Reverend Larry Garza–All Nations Church*

**“...read it several times and meditate on these truths.”**

*Tim Grisham–Equippers for Christ International*

**“...every Christian NEEDS this book—completing my third reading of this manuscript—expect to return to it often.”**

*Captain Steve Lawrence–Commercial 747 Pilot*

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And Blessings Not Received*

GERALD DAVIS D.D.



*A REVELATION OF TRUTH TO THE BODY OF  
CHRIST THAT IS SURE TO RELEASE  
ABUNDANT FINANCIAL BLESSINGS AND  
PHYSICAL HEALINGS FROM LONG-TERM  
ILLNESSES: A BOOK LONG OVERDUE.*

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And Blessings Not Received  
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# FOREWORD

Skilful surgeons have the capacity to probe deep on the inside of our innermost being and extrapolate the precious from the vile. This treatise, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, is a classic on the far-reaching effects of both sin, and forgiveness of sin, in the local church.

This learned mentor carefully and meticulously examines, as a high priest, every inward part, motive, and action of the heart. He explains how carnal deeds can damage the great faith that was “once delivered to the saints.”

This is a deep, challenging piece of literature from one of the thinking minds of our day. May we all walk circumspectly, and with all humility.

Thank you, Gerald, for placing such a valuable manual in our possession. I trust the spirit of forgiveness and repentance comes upon every reader as it has me.

*Ron G. Smith D.D.*

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# COMMENTS & REVIEWS

This book, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, is interesting—and I think it will help people. I'm so glad God is a God of a second chance.

**Dodie Osteen**  
**Lakewood Church**  
**Houston, Texas**

What a privilege it was to receive your manuscript, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*. It is interesting and insightful and a blessing from God.

**Alan Bullock**  
**Executive—Daystar Television Network**  
**Dallas, Texas**

I've just finished reading your new book, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, and I must say that I can't wait to have it in our bookstore and available to our congregation. The importance of this teaching must not be overlooked by those that wish to live in abounding favor. Thank you for addressing this very important subject in such a thoughtful way! The revelation brought forth in your book is not only thought provoking and challenging, but it is written in such a way that it can be understood by all. I am convinced that this book will bring a great blessing to anyone that will apply its teaching.

**Tony Krishack**  
**Senior Pastor—Victory Christian Center**  
**Supervisor—South Texas District**  
**Foursquare Churches**  
**Houston, Texas**

I have known Gerald Davis, the author of *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, for twenty-five years, and I know the integrity of his heart. I have seen Gerald's passion for the Kingdom of God to be released in the earth. The information given here will help many be put in a position to walk in its fullness every day of their lives. This is the day of "Due Order." Due Order involves walking right with our brothers and walking in forgiveness. Gerald has given the church a look at a very important truth that can really save some lives.

**Glen Stead**

**Founder—Prince Albert Family Church  
President—Canadian Fellowship of  
Churches and Ministers  
Prince Albert—Saskatchewan, Canada**

This dissertation, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, on the subject of forgiveness, is a very rational and logical discourse on the consequences of integrity. Gerald has produced a gem of revelation!

**Rev. Larry Garza—Pastor  
Missionary Evangelist  
All Nations Church  
Dickenson, Texas**

In an era when the real church is being defined by actions and not merely words, Gerald Davis has hit the nail on the head! Thank you, Gerald, for saying the hard things well in this book, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*.

**Pastor G. F. Watkins  
Powerhouse Christian Center  
Katy, Texas**

As it is with your other books that I have read, as well as your messages on tape and CD, this book, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, is a message that must be understood and then lived out in order to have God's best here in this life. After twenty-three years in ministry, I have seen the truths in this book played out in peoples' lives many times, as well as in my own life; and I can say that there is a direct connection here, to living healthy and wealthy according to III John 2.

I pray that anyone who reads this book will take the time to read it several times, and meditate on these truths, to encourage and further strengthen their Christian walk.

**Tim Grisham**

**Tim Grisham Ministries**

**Equippers for Christ International**

**Tipton, Indiana**

I can't think of a better title for this critically important book. With *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*, Dr. Davis pulls no punches. His four goals for writing it will be achieved if the church leadership will take heed and do what is taught here. I pray that the church leadership will promote it to the whole body as a life-lesson to be individually applied.

In reading this manuscript, I was deeply moved by the scriptural warnings and challenges. I prayed for guidance in searching my own soul. Now I have some work to do. I expect there to be some cost, but I now understand the glory, and it will far outweigh the cost. Thank you, Gerald Davis.

**EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS THIS BOOK.** As for me and my house, we will apply its instruction. I'll complete my third reading of this manuscript tonight. It is such an important reference that I expect to return to it often.

**Captain Steve Lawrence**  
**Professional Pilot, Boeing 747**  
**Gospel Minister**  
**World Ministry Fellowship**  
**The Woodlands, Texas**

It is a privilege for me to write a word of encouragement for the new book by Dr. Gerald Davis, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*. I've known Dr. Gerald for twenty-nine years, both as a former pastor and now a fellow evangelist. He lives the message he proclaims.

God's people are hurting because they've been offended. I believe one reason we're not walking in the complete victory God wants us to walk in is because we're not dealing with these offenses. Dr. Gerald shows us how to spot the pitfalls that seek to destroy us and how to avoid them so we can be strong and healthy Christians.

This is an excellent book and Dr. Gerald does a magnificent job of probing into our lives so that we quit just treating the symptoms, but instead get to the root causes. I believe this book will bring healing to the body of Christ, not as a Band-Aid on shallow symptoms, but as a deep probe into our spirits to bring a lasting wholeness. This book will speak to your life and Dr. Gerald has done a

wonderful job to help set people free. This is a *must read* for every serious-minded Christian.

**Evangelist Gary Wood, D.D.**  
**Sugar Land, Texas**

I just finished reading your manuscript and found it to be thought provoking, as well as causing me to do a little soul searching of my own. I am sure this book will be a blessing to the body of Christ, and will be the impetus of many people seeking and receiving forgiveness.

**Pastor Don Nordin**  
**Christian Life Temple**  
**Houston, Texas**

Dr. Gerald Davis has written a masterpiece from the wisdom of God in his new book, *A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received*. Dr. Davis eloquently shares a foundational principle concerning repentance, restitution, forgiveness and reconciliation that has been greatly overlooked by the 20th Century Church. This work reminds me of King Josiah, who uncovered the Word of the Lord and led his nation into a great revival and season of plenty. May it be so for every reader of this timely revelation.

**Katheryn Freeberg, Editor**  
**Vision-Quest Publishing**  
**Tulsa, Oklahoma**

# INTRODUCTION

During my fifty years of ministry, I have concluded many counseling sessions with a heavy heart for the children of God. After seeing so much brokenness in the lives of believers, I constantly seek the Lord for understanding to better reach his people with truth that will set them free and open the windows of heavenly blessings.

*A Cause and A Cure For Unanswered Prayer and Blessings Not Received* is an answer to that prayer. It is a powerful revelation on the questions of remitting and retaining sins. This revelation will set many readers free to receive blessings that God is longing to bestow upon his people.

There are four things that I hope to accomplish as a result of the thoughts I have revealed in this writing. They are:

1. To heighten the integrity level among God's people in their dealings with one another.
2. To accomplish physical and emotional healing for people who have had long-term illnesses.
3. To stir up and release financial blessings for God's people who have not yet seen the blessings promised to those who tithe and give. This book is particularly for people who have not seen God's dream come true

for them to be a lender instead of a debtor and borrower.

4. To raise the level of respect for Christians in the eyes of the non-Christian world.

We will be looking at many revealing scriptures addressing the topic of forgiveness through the following pages. Some of these teachings have been overlooked in many circles. There are times that some scriptures may appear to be contradictory, but I have learned that these are the occasions when we can receive hidden truths and revelations that can forever change our lives if we don't set them aside.

Man doesn't know the inner workings of other people's lives. Only God Almighty knows what is in every person's heart. Humans are limited to seeing the outward appearance. God alone must be the judge of sin, and not mortal man. What may be sin for one person may not be sin for another. Some sins are obvious, but some are not. (1 Corinthians 4:4) (Romans 14:23)

Man may offer forgiveness for something the Lord wouldn't comply with. Then again, man might withhold forgiveness for something that God will forgive. The Ten Commandments are very clear. Other than that, sin is basically a violation of a good conscience. "...for whatever is not from faith {in this context, a violation of good conscience} is sin."

With God, the more we learn and know of spiritual things, the more we are held accountable. God judges us individually.

We are taught of the Lord that we must forgive all offenses against us if we are to be forgiven by the Heavenly Father for our sins (Matthew 6:14-15); but little has been said about the need to repent to one another.

Only in recent years have I come to understand the meaning of the Lord's teaching on remitting and retaining other men's sins. I feel a strong sense of urgency in my spirit to share this understanding with God's people.

# CHAPTER I

## Delivered From What?

**"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they shall be retained."**

Jesus' words in John 20:23 (KJV)

**"If you forgive any man's sins, they are forgiven; and if you hold them un-forgiven, they are un-forgiven."** (Phillips translation)

I have never heard any teachings on the above verses, and have seldom heard anyone refer to them. Perhaps it is because they are not well understood or simple to navigate. The revelation presented in this book is certain to unveil a major reason why many people are not healed of their sicknesses and are not seeing the blessings in their finances they have been seeking.

If the reader has an open mind to consider the scriptural meditations embodied in this book, they will find it, at the least, motivation to search the soul. (Psalm 139:24)

When first reading the above verses, it seems that Jesus is giving the disciples power to control whose sins are forgiven, or else not forgiven!

For example, there is a large religious group that selects certain men who meet their religious and educational qualifications. They place these persons

in cubicles in established facilities, set certain times when people can come and confess their sins, and these men are believed to provide remittance for their sins.

People who read the scriptures for themselves quickly realize that this is not consistent with many other scriptural principles. If we adopted that theology, it would throw many other teachings of the Lord into dark confusion.

Someone rightly said, "Faith begins where the will of God is known."

We cannot comply with the measures God has required of us to follow if we don't understand them. We cannot live in the benefits God has provided for us unless the instructions are clear in our hearts.

God said, "**My** people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." (Hosea 4:6) In Proverbs 11:9 Solomon taught: "...through knowledge the **righteous** {redeemed children} **will be delivered.**"

### **Delivered from what?**

If we have accepted the salvation of the Lord by faith through the sacrifice of His Son, we are included among the just, and our soul is already saved and delivered from hell when we die!

**Since that is true, then from  
what do we need deliverance?**

**Our soul is saved for the next life by grace alone.**

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**How we control ourselves in this life governs whether we succeed or fail now, in our earthly journey.**

This passage in Proverbs is referring to being delivered from **failure in this life**: failure to obtain all God has promised for us **now, in this time**, as well as in the life to come. Jesus promised His followers a hundredfold, "**now in this time**" **spiritual, physical, and material success for the whole man.**

**These three states are the three areas of human need: thirtyfold, sixtyfold, hundredfold provision!**

**"But others fell on good ground, and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (Matthew 13:8)**

**"...who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, {good family} and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life." (Mark 10:30)**

**"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper {material} in all things and be in health {physical}, just as your soul {spiritual} prospers." (III John 2)**

### **Forgiving Sin (Offenses)**

Jesus taught us to forgive, and rightly so. Most of us are familiar with the many scriptures where He taught the necessity of forgiveness. Most ministers

emphasize the need to be quick to forgive. We cannot do otherwise and be like our Heavenly Father. If we do not forgive others their trespasses against us, Jesus taught that God would not forgive us our trespasses. We have accepted this teaching with no argument, although it is not always easy to forgive from the heart.

### **Questions on Forgiveness**

The act of forgiveness is thought provoking and becomes more so as the believer seeks to obey the Lord in his commandment. Here are some questions I have experienced by Christians truly seeking to forgive:

*First question:* One thing that has troubled some believers who have been offended, is how to forgive the offender when there is no communication available with that individual: **"How am I expected to forgive them when they won't even talk to me?"**

*A big question:* Why would God expect us to do what He Himself doesn't do? If God forgives everyone, then why are people going to hell? **Apparently everyone has not received God's forgiveness; and they, therefore, suffer the consequences as though they were never forgiven.**

*Another troublesome question:* Does the Lord require us to forgive everybody, of any offense, when there is no remorse shown for what they did?

**What does it really mean to forgive?**

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In our reference, John 20:23, the Greek word for remit, APHIEMI, is a branch word from APHESIS, which is the word translated repeatedly for forgiveness of sins. The difference is the word APHIEMI means literally "to send away." It is a word of action. The word used in this passage implies that by sending the sin away means to look upon the sin no more: basically, to put it behind you and refuse to meditate on it—to forget it.

One person told me how the Lord spoke to him when he asked the Lord if he had truly forgiven a serious offense. He said that the Holy Spirit showed him that he would know when he had really forgiven when he could sincerely pray blessings upon the offender.

Forgiveness, like salvation, is an act of obedience and faith. He began praying for the offender in faith, not looking at his own angry feelings as his guideline, but at the Word of God instead; and eventually, his prayers became true in his heart and he was set free from hatred and resentment. (Matthew 5:44)

Here are some helpful definitions to remember as we follow the Lord in forgiveness:

1. Let the offense go, do not continue to be angered or frustrated by it.
2. **For-give** in reverse is **give-for (give it up for a reason)**.
3. Release the offense from our future efforts to make recovery, or do anything else about it; lay down any desire for vengeance.

**It is for our own benefit and  
future to forgive.**

**Question: What is God's view toward an offending person if they don't make an effort to be reconciled and/or repent to the offended person?**

We'll talk about this question soon! **But right now, what about you**, the reader of this book? What might you be dealing with? What kind of situation are you meditating on in your own life? What kind of offense is in your history? Are you an offender? Are you the offended—or possibly both?

I know the writings of this book will give you some pause. There will be illumination on new ground. I will assure you, the main truth in this book is not a well-worn path. You will need to think and pray as you read on, and I encourage you to read the scripture references provided. Be sure to stay open to the Holy Spirit to give witness to you as you proceed.

We are informed by Jesus in John 20:23, that if we remit (forgive) sins of other people, then He, the great and final judge, will confirm it. If we retain their sins, He will do the same. The main message of this book is derived from the revelation God gave me on these verses.

I know there are many disappointments in prayer because of a lack of understanding on this subject of remission and retention of sins, causing many to remain sick and continue to suffer financial distress. You have this book in your hand because the Lord longs to bless you. He will make you a blessing to others and grant you peace and prosperity as your soul prospers through His Word.

# CHAPTER II

## How Do We "Remit" (Forgive) and "Retain" Sins?

I am aware of two ways that we can remit other men's sins. The first way applies to remitting sins for a new convert; the second way applies to fellow believers.

### **1. The first way to forgive sins is through the ministry of evangelism to the lost.**

When we reach out to convert the lost and lead people to Jesus as their Lord and Savior, we give them witness according to the scriptures. We lead them to a decision to receive the Lord. As they follow through in faith and repent of their sins, the grace of God through the blood of Jesus will save them. We can safely and confidently tell them that their sins are remitted. There is no longer any record in Heaven of any sin they have ever committed. When we tell them that the Lord God, to whom they repent, has forgiven all of their sins, we are certain of this truth. (1 John 1:9)

We are passing on the forgiveness we have experienced "by faith" in the Lord. According to the scriptures, people will perish without a preacher (witness) to tell them the good news. This is why we send missionaries at great expense to other countries. "And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:14-15)

As we forgive, God forgives. God works through His

witnesses. "And they went out, and preached everywhere, the Lord working **WITH** them..." (Mark 16:20)

Jesus asked the probing question before He healed a palsied man: "**For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, and walk?'**" (Matthew 9:5). The disciples spoke healing to the sick often and believers still do the same today. We can be confident when we tell them that their sins are forgiven, that it is done. Jesus declared it: "...the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." (John 6:37)

I am not implying that we save their souls by any power of our own. Only the Lord can do that. However, we participate in the remission of their sins, just as we participate in their healing and blessing, by bringing them faith through our witness.

## **2. The second way of forgiving sins concerns a fellow believer.**

When a believer in some way damages (offends) another believer, the offended person can forgive that person of the offense, but can anyone else forgive the offender of that offense?

According to Jesus' statement in our reference, not even God will forgive that offender of that offense until certain things take place. "Whose soever sins ye remit, {forgive} they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, {not forgiven} they are retained." (John 20:23 KJV)

The remainder of this book deals with **how we retain other men's sins** and the effects of that retention.

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## How Do We Retain Other Men's Sins?

Jesus clearly taught unconditional forgiveness. He assured us that the Heavenly Father would not forgive our sins if we didn't forgive our offenders. How then is there a teaching by this same Jesus on how we **retain other men's sins**?

### Questions to Ponder

I invite you to look closely with me at this apparent paradox.

***First Question: Do you believe there are people dying and going to hell today?***

If "yes" is your answer, then why? God has offered forgiveness to them. When Jesus cried out to the Father from the cross He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) We Christians believe that at that point, forgiveness was enacted for all sinners who ever lived or would live, and for every sin that was ever committed.

***Second Question: God has forgiven sin, so why are people going to hell?*** There are three valid reasons:

1. They won't accept the plan God gave us from His word to obtain that forgiveness.
2. They refuse to accept what they do as being wrong, or as sin. They refuse to acknowledge wrongdoing.
3. They love their sin. They know they are wrong, but they refuse to repent. Pride and self-justification

controls them. They excuse themselves: "Everyone does it," or "Nobody is perfect," or "What do you expect? I'm only human."

*Third Question: Are these people forgiven?* The price has obviously been paid for their sins by Jesus' shed blood. Their forgiveness is now available from the heavenly Father's heart.

## Repentance

Peter made it clear, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38)

Bible believers widely accept that unless a person repents and accepts God's plan for salvation, they will not be saved. Jesus said, "**...unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.**" (Luke 13:3, and again in verse 5)

*Fourth Question: How do WE retain (hold as unforgiven) other men's sins, if we are commanded to forgive everyone?*

Repentance to the offended, by the one who created or caused the offense, is a major factor and issue here. You will see this clearly as we move through the following chapters.

# CHAPTER III

## "If He Repents"

Let us consider what Jesus said in Luke 17:3 **about dealings between believers (Christian to Christian).**

"Take heed to yourselves. {Do a self-inventory.} If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; {make him aware of what he has done and how you view it} and **IF HE REPENTS**, forgive him." (Luke 17:3) In the following verse four, Jesus makes it clear that no matter how often a brother offends you, you are to forgive him: **IF HE REPENTS**. Notice the emphasis He places on the words: "*if he repents.*" Jesus mentions it twice in these two verses.

**The benefits of forgiveness for the offender cannot precede repentance.** While Jesus stresses that forgiveness must be provided by the offended person, He also declares that repentance must be requested before that forgiveness can be completed. We are to maintain forgiveness in our hearts at all times toward people, regardless of what they have done, because that is what God does for us. Likewise, we must also be just as quick to repent for our offenses and damages to our fellow Christians.

**When the offender repents and asks for forgiveness is when forgiveness becomes effective in his or her life.**

Here is an illustration in the natural realm of this spiritual truth. If a person's appendix becomes inflamed

and infected, it must be removed or it can burst and cause imminent death. If the appendix is removed, however, the body will heal naturally. The principle in repentance is the same. Solomon observed: "Cast out the scoffer, and contention shall leave," (Proverbs 22:10); and again, "Where there is no wood, the fire goes out;" (Proverbs 26:20). Get rid of anger, guilt, resentment and strife through repentance, and the desired results will develop.

**When repentance takes place, the results of healing and financial blessings will follow naturally.**

At times, it can seem as severe as surgery to have to repent. So little has been said concerning the requirement to repent to a brother or sister before the forgiveness cycle can be completed. Jesus' teaching on repentance must be properly understood, appreciated, and applied to obtain the desired results.

**From these verses, you can see that it is extremely important to know how God views offenses between believers. They must be dealt with according to the instruction of His Word.**

### **Forgiveness Reversed**

Jesus told the story of a man who owed a huge debt to his creditor (Matthew 18:23-31). The debtor went to his creditor and asked forgiveness because he had nothing to pay. His creditor had mercy on him. He was totally forgiven of the entire debt. In Jesus' story, the creditor represented our Heavenly Father. The debtor obviously represented us, the Fathers' debtors:

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"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23). That is the spiritual application.

The natural application dealt with a **money** problem. All of Jesus' listeners understood that. After this debtor received forgiveness for the debt he owed, he went out and caught a fellow by the throat and demanded the entire amount that was owed to him by his debtor, which was far less in value than the debt that he had been forgiven. Because his debtor couldn't pay, the fellow pled for mercy. The man who was forgiven his debt wouldn't forgive his debtor and had him thrown into prison until he could pay the full amount. He was within his legal right, according to natural law, in doing so.

Notice in Jesus' story that this non-forgiving debtor later had his **forgiveness reversed** by his creditor, and the debt was **reinstated** against him. He therefore would suffer the same penalty that he had prescribed for his debtor, as though he had never been forgiven! The main emphasis here is that **forgiveness was given and was then reversed**.

### **Handling A Wrong (or Offense) Between Fellow Believers**

Hold that teaching on forgiveness in your mind, and consider the teaching Jesus gives on repentance as he explains how to handle a wrong done between an offender and an offended brother in Matthew 18:15. "...if your brother **{not an outsider, but a brother}** sins against you, **{breaks an agreement that leaves you in a loss situation, or hurts you with a lie, or**

does anything that damages you in some way socially, financially, spiritually or physically—including marriage issues} go and tell him his fault {Discuss it with him and don't just assume that he knows, but be sure that he knows.} between you and him alone."

Notice now, this is the OFFENDED going to the offender, making an effort to get the offender to concede what he did wrong and to make the correction. If he doesn't acknowledge his wrong and make an effort to correct the problem, or ask forgiveness for what he did (or didn't do), Jesus offers other steps to take to obtain repentance. Refer back to the above scripture reference in Matthew 18.

If the offender does not correct the problem, or repent and ask forgiveness after the offended brother comes to him; He tells us to count him, the offender, *as a heathen and a publican*, a total outsider. This means that God retains the offender's sin against his offended brother because of his lack of repentance toward his brother.

The original word for retain in John 20:23 is KRATEO, which means literally to be strong, obtain, hold and hold fast. It is a strong word. You might think of a *retaining* wall or a levy in reference to this word: a structure that holds great weight or restricts and prevents great blessings from coming through.

Jesus is dealing with issues within the family of God between fellow believers. Notice the special efforts

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He stressed in these passages to encourage the offender to repent:

**First (Matthew 18:15)** try private conversation; then, if that doesn't work...

**Second (Matthew 18:16)** involve others among the brethren to deal with him. If that doesn't accomplish reconciliation or repentance from the brother...

**Third (Matthew 18:17)** take him before the council (the governing leaders in the local church).

If these three efforts bring no results, Jesus tells us to view the unrepentant offender as an outsider and not a brother. There surely must be a significant and highly important reason for this kind of severity.

**Why** would Jesus stress such effort to be made to accomplish repentance, if it isn't necessary for an offender to repent to his brother?

**Do you see it?** According to the first story about the debtor, the offenses for which he has received forgiveness were reversed and added back on to his account. **Jesus had the same view toward the fellow who wouldn't repent to a fellow believer as he did toward the debtor in the first story (Matthew 18:33) who would not forgive his debtor.** These scriptures clearly tell us that the unrepentant offender's sin would be retained by the offended brother, and therefore, also by God.

**"...whose soever sins ye retain, {hold as unforgiven} they are retained."**

# CHAPTER IV

## What about Legal Action?

Is there ever a circumstance where believers should take legal action against a believer?

According to the scripture in Deuteronomy 15:3, it is scripturally permitted and acceptable for a believer to take legal action against an outsider, a non-covenant person or non-Christian.

When dealing with transactions, brother to brother, in Deuteronomy Chapter 15:1-4, God instructed His covenant people in verse three with these words: "Of a **foreigner** {not a covenant person or a brother} you may require it; {Use necessary measures to make him pay what he owes. Obviously, that would mean it is acceptable to file suit against them if necessary.} but your hand shall release what is owed by your brother." (Deuteronomy 15:3)

A lady once told me about a time when she was considering a legal solution against her former husband, who had abandoned her and their daughter. In his youth, he had confessed Christ. Family and friends were outraged over his neglect, especially since he was financially successful and she was struggling.

During a time of prayer, the Lord spoke to her and said: "If you will forgive, and give me this matter, I will be a father to your child." She let the legal matter go and never told her daughter why. Afterwards, she was quickly promoted again and again, her salary

increasing exponentially. A few years later, the former husband contacted her and asked forgiveness, seeking to establish a relationship with his daughter. When she discussed his request with her daughter, to her amazement the thirteen-year-old girl said: "I will see my father, but I already have a father; God is my father. An earthly father gives earthly gifts, but my father gives eternal gifts." Is there any monetary value that can be placed on the faith of a child? God was faithful not only to cover the loss, but also to give increase and reveal Himself in a special way to this little girl who was abandoned by her father.

If an agreement is made on some kind of contract with a corporation, business system or group entity that operates on the legal level of the courts, and they default in their agreement after you have done your part in good faith, there is no restriction on a Christian to seek justice in the legal system.

It is much different in dealing with a **fellow believer** on some type of personal breach of agreement or offense. Jesus taught us in Matthew 5:40: "If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also." **He is speaking to covenant people here, dealing with believer to believer situations. This lawsuit would be in direct violation of the Lord's approval.**

We should do everything possible to settle with a believer out of court, even if the decision seems out-of-balance and falls short for you. Solomon taught us in Ecclesiastes 10:4: "...for yielding pacifieth great offenses." (KJV) There is wisdom and **absolute trust in God in this kind of yielding.** This method is not

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taught for the purpose of making us passive and allowing any form of abuse. It does not mean we are to be weak or intimidated. God is not into his children being losers, or being governed by fear of a fight.

**If any people need to learn to be good fighters against evil, it is the people of God.** "Fight the good fight of faith," (I Timothy 6:12) while remembering that "...faith without works is dead..." (James 2:20) **We must never give up on being a winner.**

Someone quoted that verse this way: "Faith without works and you're dead." However, fighting evil must be done within the boundaries and rules given to us by our Lord Jesus, *the captain of our salvation*. Our battles are not "...against flesh and blood {man}, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) Jesus taught us to function in love, to be non-combatant toward one another, and to be willing to take the high road of forgiveness. He taught us to **trust God to make it up to us**. We have already seen how He feels about the believer who won't become contrite and repent after he has offended and caused loss to his brother.

### Paul's Observation

Paul the Apostle wrote in Romans 16:17 (Phillips Translation): "And now I implore you, my brothers, to **keep a watchful eye** on those who cause trouble {offenses} and make difficulties {losses} among you, in plain opposition to the teaching you have been given, and **steer clear of them**. Such men do not

really serve our Lord Christ at all but their own ambitions. Yet with their plausible and attractive arguments {winsome personalities and skilful tongues} they deceive those who are too simple-hearted {trusting} to see through them." Selah!

Listen to the Savior of our souls as he delivers this solemn warning to offenders in Luke 17:1-2: "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but **woe to him through whom they do come!** It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones {simple-hearted, trusting believers}."

The following verses emphasize the further purpose of His warnings. Luke 17:3 reads: "Take heed to yourselves. If your brother {another believer} sins against you, rebuke him; and **if he repents**, forgive him." Verse four continues: "And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, '**I repent**,' you shall forgive him." The Lord obviously doesn't want the **offended, or the offender**, to suffer the effects of unforgiveness.

### **An Excellent Study**

I highly recommend a study of the Apostle Paul's teachings in the following referenced verses if you are serious about doing things according to what pleases our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Read, meditate and pray through I Corinthians 6:1-11. **All believers should carefully read these verses from the Bible.** Paul is very detailed in these passages showing how Christians should resolve offenses and

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disagreements between themselves. It leaves no room for guesswork. Corrections should be done within the Body of Christ, not in an outside court of law. These verses certainly comply with what Jesus taught in handling offenses between believers.



# CHAPTER V

## Instructions To The Offender

Jesus warns and instructs the OFFENDER in Matthew 5:23: **"Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar {tithes and offerings}, and there remember that your brother has something against you {someone you have offended and it hasn't been dealt with}, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother {or sister}, and then come and offer your gift."**

## Financial Effects

Jesus is explaining that your gift will not be blessed and accepted by the Father, and it will not be credited to you as a seed sown for a harvest, if you have not repented for, or corrected an unreconciled offense against a fellow believer. **It never pays to set aside a guilty or gnawing conscience.** Remember, with God our Father, "...to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed {pay attention to His instruction} than {to offer} the fat of rams {which indicates some big offering to offset disobedience}." (I Samuel 15:22) Many people have prayed and tithed and given offerings for financial blessings, and wondered why they do not see a harvest. **Could this be your key?**

If an offering will not be credited to you with a blessing until you go to your brother for reconciliation, should we then wonder that God would not remit a trespass without repentance to the offended?

## Physical Healing

Consider this: James wrote in Chapter 5:16; "Confess your trespasses one to another {those whom you have offended}, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." It may help to do some meditation here. If this speaks to you, please don't ignore it.

Based on this verse, the lack of repentance or reconciliation could stand in the way of physical healing. Think about it!

We can't just bypass those to whom we owe an apology or debt and go to God for forgiveness, healing, and financial blessings. If God will not forgive a person because they refuse to forgive the offender, neither will He forgive an offender who refuses to repent to the one he has harmed. If we reject this conclusion, it forces us to the position that God is more tolerant toward the offenders and less exacting of them than He is toward the ones who are required to forgive. That wouldn't coincide with the many Scriptures about our Father, who offers his favor to those who do right. Read Psalm 15.

How does this affect an offense against someone who is no longer available for reconciliation? Maybe the offended person has died, or is no longer reachable due to some circumstance. In such a case, consider making restitution, or repent to their family where it is applicable. Thank God we have a merciful God! If you are willing to contact them at the time you learn of this truth, but can't, God who knows the heart is sure to forgive. When God sees that we have done our best to comply with his word, He is abundant in mercy.

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## **Eternal Life**

If we need to repent to someone and we are able to do so, but refuse to act on it, that disobedience can cause us financial and physical problems in this life. Paul the Apostle made a reference in I Corinthians 5:5 concerning a brother who had caused him some major problems. Paul said he had to "deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit {soul} may be saved..." He would have done this through a conversation he had with God about the fellow. He obviously believed that the fellow's behavior would open the door to his physical destruction. Paul also believed that an unrepentant believer could lose his 'rewards' in heaven because of his unrighteous deeds, yet still retain his eternal home in Heaven. This certainly speaks volumes for God's amazing grace.

## **A Family Affair**

Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, His obvious intent is that we also think like He thinks: "...we have the mind of Christ." (I Corinthians 2:16) There is no doubt that our Heavenly Father requires reconciliation between the members of His family: "...love one another; as I have loved you..." (John 13:34) "For what fellowship has righteousness {God} with lawlessness {sin}? And what accord {fellowship} has Christ with Belial {the devil}?" (II Corinthians 6:14-15)

The remarkable story of Jacob's reconciliation with his brother Esau is recorded in Genesis 32. God told Jacob in Genesis 31 to return to the land of his



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- ❖ Refusing to repent to the offended believer—
  - ❖ Sin against the Holy Ghost, which will cost you eternal life. (Matthew 12:31: which is not covered in this book.)

God does not require His children to do more than He, Himself, will do. We can't force forgiveness on anyone who refuses to repent. God doesn't force forgiveness on anyone who refuses to repent! That is why some people who have been forgiven from the heart of God through the sacrifice of his own son, will still miss heaven when they die. We must maintain forgiveness toward those who offend us. We must know that we would pass forgiveness on to them if they asked, regardless of what they have done. This is what God does for a believing child who sins and then repents. When an injured person FORGIVES, it is to his own benefit. The same benefit is true for an offending person who REPENTS.

# CHAPTER VI

## "A Conscience Without Offense Toward God and Man" (Acts 24:16)

If we maintain forgiveness in our hearts toward others, then God will forgive our sins when we ask him to. **We are to forgive, even if the offender never asks for our forgiveness.**

If the **offender** wants God's:

1. **Favor on their life**
2. **Blessings on their tithe and offerings**
3. **Forgiveness for their wrongdoing**
4. **Healing for their body and emotions:**

They should ask the offended person to forgive them and, if possible, make any necessary restitution. In Acts 24:16, Paul was very careful about being an offender. It reads: "This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men." Paul apparently knew that **he had an obligation to stay right with his fellowman in order to be right with God.**

An offender will pay, in some way, for the wrong he has done until he is obedient to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. **"...but the way of the transgressors is hard."** (Proverbs 13:15 KJV) If we are able to correct the injury, i.e. pay money owed or make other amends, then we should make every effort to do so. If that is not possible, the offender **must ask for forgiveness** from that fellow Christian. God will

then **release his obligation and forgive him**, and reestablish his good standing in the family of God and his good standing and favor with God the Father.

**Thank God for forgiveness!**

## **Offending In Word**

Consider James' reference to offenses in Chapter 3:2. **"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."** (KJV) Offenses are going to happen as Christ said in Matthew 18:7. Not one of us can go through life without offending someone. We often are not aware that we have offended. It is self-centered and immature to be sensitive to trite and little oversights by people. We should carry a good attitude toward people and not easily get our feelings hurt. "Love...is not provoked..." (I Corinthians 13:4-5) We should always give people the benefit of the doubt wherever possible.

The offenses we have under study concern things that are done by a brother or sister who made an agreement or a contract, whether written or verbal, and betrayed an obligation or trust. The parties to the agreement accepted each other's word concerning a matter ("**offend not in word**"). They trusted in each other's integrity to fulfill their agreement. I am mainly addressing hurtful losses that occur because of a breach in such an agreement. Each party felt and believed that they would share mutual benefit because of their agreement. Then, unforeseen events may develop and create pressure, and thereby create

temptation to shift the burden to the other party. One of the parties is in a position to step out from under the obligation (agreement) to get relief, and avoid suffering the loss. The other person is left to face the damage and disappointment. The offender will be further tempted to tell half-truths, or quite possibly lies, to justify his action—and so the cover-up begins.

Offense in word could be a breach in a marriage promise, causing broken dreams and emotional pain. We are all too painfully aware of high-profile ministers, and many less publicly known ministers and Christians that have caused embarrassment and disappointment because of their lack of integrity in their marriage vows. Such activity among ministers causes irreparable damage to many peoples' lives. It creates distrust among observers and, of course, disrespect for the message they present. Common sense will tell the observer that, if Christians will do this, they will also lie. The breakdown in trust is strengthened and continues to spread as they discuss it among themselves. One can only imagine how many souls have been destroyed by this lack of integrity among Christians and Christian leaders.

This reference is in no way an effort to disparage or criticize those who have failed in keeping a pledge. They and God alone know how much they have suffered because of their violations and shortcomings. The humiliation alone is close to unbearable for them, besides the material losses and the continual, ongoing problems. They need our prayers and any mercies we can offer. I mention this to hopefully prevent some future failures that could

occur in the life of the reader. **Integrity is a continual process, and requires constant determination and self-discipline, and yes, some self-denial.**

Offending in word happens often in marriage, and in business dealings or other types of arrangements where trust is broken. It usually involves money and material welfare.

### **Major Issues**

Offense in word concerns major issues and it needs close attention. Temptation to do wrong comes to all of us. However, when it damages others if we yield to that temptation, we need to repent to God and to that individual, and take responsibility rather than making excuses. Temptation is not a sin, yielding to the temptation is sin. **When we sin, it always has an adverse effect on those with whom we are in relationship.**

### **Integrity**

I hope you are beginning to appreciate the importance of this writing. **This book is meant to tighten up our integrity and help pull up the slack in our business and private agreements among the Christian family.**

Solomon used many proverbs in reference to diligence, which includes integrity. Remember that he got his wisdom as a gift from God.

Think on these verses:

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**"He who deals with a slack hand becomes poor, the hand of the diligent makes one rich." (Proverbs 10:4)**

**"Do you see a man who excels {is diligent} in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown {or mean} men." (Proverbs 22:29)**

**"But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich." (Proverbs 13:4)**

We should be impressed by this one:

**"The plans of the diligent *lead* surely to plenty..." (Proverbs 21:5)**



# CHAPTER VII

## A Very Sad Commentary

It is a sad commentary that many Christians would rather do business with a non-Christian, because of former dealings with Christians who lacked a strong level of integrity. They know they can sue a non-Christian, if necessary, without losing God's favor. But, they can't sue their brother or someone in the Christian Family.

I have heard several Christians declare, over my 50 years of ministry, that they will avoid doing business with a Christian because of this. Many banks have determined not to loan money to churches because they have been proven to be poor risks. Can you see how the devil must love that? It keeps money out of the hands of God's people, the very ones who are most likely to sponsor God's work. It also lowers respect for Christians in the eyes of the business world.

**This loss of reputation definitely hinders the work of the Lord** among His Christian Family. It could have been totally avoided if God's people understood the principle of "**sins retained**" and knew the importance of maintaining integrity in their business dealings. I have observed that many non-Christians maintain a higher integrity level than some people I have known who are Christians. Many of us have learned not to do business with a person who uses their Christian front in order to obtain our trust. **We should let our Christian**

**lives be seen above the voice of our testimony;** and we certainly should be speaking up for Jesus!

After he studied Christianity and the teachings and life of Jesus, Mahatma Gandhi, a greatly respected and popular historical religious leader of India, made this observation: **"If it were not for some Christians I have known, I would be one."**

### **Beware**

Let the offending Christian take caution. If God tells his children, "avenge not yourselves" (and He does: Leviticus 19:18), it is because He has promised to do the avenging for His children. See Romans 12:19: "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves... 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."

Don't make the mistake of thinking this warning applies only toward the ungodly when offending the godly. **It also applies to the relationships between believers. I personally would choose the loss of some money and other inconveniences if necessary, any time, rather than to have the disfavor and chastening of God.** When we offend a brother who trusted us, we do two things:

1. **We sacrifice our Father's favor.**
2. **We open wide the door to the devil,** who "walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8). Satan is constantly "seeking" for an opening to do his dirty work.

We should do whatever we need to do to make that correction, in every way we can, and as soon as we can.

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Paul urged in Hebrews 12:1: "...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance {patience} the race that is set before us."

In horse racing there is what is called a handicap. A more capable horse is weighted down for the purpose of making the race more even with a less able horse. **Paul labels sin as weights that will disable us in accomplishing our highest potential in this life.** Unrepented sins and unreconciled offenses toward another believer can obviously beset us, meaning to hinder us, limit us, slow us down, tire us, prevent us, and create disappointment in our lives. **Sin, literally, makes losers out of us!**

### Psalm Fifteen

It would be good for all readers of this message to read Psalm 15 at this point. David is asking, "**Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? {Who will enjoy God's favor, and dwell in His continual presence and blessings?}**" (Psalm 15:1) The prophetic answer follows as David sings: "**He who swears {makes an agreement and gives his word or promise} to his own hurt {loss} and does not change.**" (Psalms 15:4) Can you see that God respects and honors people who keep their word in the face of personal loss?

### Misapplied Scripture

One of the most encouraging verses in the word of God is in Paul's writings: "**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who**

**do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit."** (Romans 8:1) Once we have repented of sin and are born again, there is no charge remaining against us for past sins. We can dismiss them from our mind and never be condemned for them again. If we violate a good conscience, however, and do wrong after conversion, the Holy Ghost is faithful to convict us of the wrong done. For these violations, we need to repent both to God and to the people we have offended. We should never use the above scripture to sidestep repentance. Satan can be very helpful in misapplying scripture.

### **Great Rewards**

It is not easy to admit that we are wrong, and have done wrong, when it will create hardship for us and cost us money. **No one gets excited about doing something that will cause them embarrassment or cost them money.** Very often an offender will not repent because of what we call "extenuating and uncontrollable circumstances."

It is very tempting to use any excuse that may come to us. We can easily justify ourselves by thinking of things other people may have said that angered us, or created a lack of desire in us to complete an agreement. Thoughts like: "Well, they haven't done everything right themselves," or "Why should I take the loss? They are not perfect either." Maybe we could justify ourselves by the fact that we couldn't control what happened that brought about our lack of willingness, or even our lack of ability, to follow through with an agreement. It is easy to justify our actions with the well-used adage: "There are two sides to

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every story." While this is always true, each one of us must still judge ourselves.

From the Lord's teachings, it becomes pretty clear that it is better to humble ourselves, repent of whatever we did wrong or failed to complete, and let other people judge themselves. I think of I Corinthians 11:31-32, which teaches: **"For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."** One of the most difficult things that all of us must do is to judge ourselves. It is so easy to justify my deeds and decisions and judge others. Judging myself may be costly to me, and therefore, difficult to do. It is naturally easier to let the loss fall on the other party.

**But, if I judge myself, it has great rewards.**

Meditate on the following thought with me for a moment. I think you would agree that **it is easier on the carnal man (the old nature) to forgive, than it is to repent.** Here is my reason for saying that. **When I forgive, it places the blame on the other party. But when I repent, it places the blame on me as the perpetrator (the one in the wrong).**

Repenting is very hard on pride. It is a humbling thing to have to do. But according to the scriptures, **"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty {self-justifying} spirit before a fall."** (Proverbs 16:18) Likewise, another verse states: **"By pride comes only contention."** (Proverbs 13:10) Renouncing pride lowers contention and increases humility.

**Forgiving someone who has offended us could nurture a certain kind of pride:** "They were wrong and I was right, and I was big enough to forgive them." Do you see what I mean? **We need to be careful here.**

The more we do to lower our level of pride, the better developed our humility becomes. That doesn't come to us naturally. It requires effort, thoughtfulness, determination and a **healthy** fear of God. God exalts those who humble themselves. (I Peter 5:6)

I believe **many financial blessings** would develop for the person who would swallow his pride, and repent to another for any damage he might have caused that person. I also believe there are **many physical healings** that would develop for those who humble themselves and repent to people they have hurt.

Observe this fascinating illustration from the life of King David in II Samuel 21. Here are the facts from that story:

Following King Saul, David had been king over Israel for a period of ten years. It suddenly stopped raining and it didn't rain for a period of three straight years. **Meditate on that interruption in prosperity.** David, as the leader in Israel, sought God about this drought. When it doesn't rain, prosperity stops: nothing grows, and cattle die, crops fail and people hunger. When it doesn't rain, everything goes downhill. After three years of no rain, the people became desperate before God. You can almost hear them cry out, "God, what is wrong, and what is the problem here?"

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While David was in deep concentration and prayer, and open to whatever God might have to say to him about this desperate situation, God spoke this to David: "It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." (II Samuel 21:1)

The Gibeonites were in league with Israel through Joshua (Joshua Chapter 10), and were therefore viewed by God as brethren. "What?" David must have thought, "That was a long time ago, and I didn't do it. Why should I, and the people, be suffering for that?"

Even though it wasn't David's fault, he was in a position of responsibility for correcting the actions of his predecessor, King Saul. Think about this. I have learned that if **God speaks, you should just act on it. Forget all of your arguments and remaining questions.** David did act on it! He contacted the offended parties and sought for reconciliation. After fulfilling their requests, the heavens opened and it began to rain. **Yes, it did cost them something. But the cost was not near what they had suffered for the last three years, or enjoyed after it began to rain.**

I pray this message and truth catch fire among God's people. It could likely stir up a great revival in the church and produce physical healings and abundant financial blessings in the Body of Christ.

# CHAPTER VIII

## What Happens When We Repent?

1. Repentance helps to humble us. If we humble ourselves, we will be exalted by God. (Paraphrased: I Peter 5:6 and James 4:10)
2. We obtain forgiveness from God when we apologize and ask others for forgiveness.
3. Repentance causes a new respect for us in the eyes of those we repent to because everyone knows how humbling it is. It may even convict the offended believer of his or her own need to repent. It may be that they need to repent to you; but I wouldn't recommend requiring or anticipating it.
4. If you apologize and ask for forgiveness and they don't forgive you, at least you have done your part in the sight of God, and God will forgive you.
5. If they do forgive you, then you have regained your relationship and may have a closer relationship than ever before.
6. Repentance can bring you blessings in your finances.
7. Repentance can stir up healing in your physical body.

## **A Fool for Five Minutes**

When President Ronald Reagan realized he had made a wrong decision in dealing with the Iran-Contra Affair, he appeared on national television and admitted that he had made a mistake and did the wrong thing. He asked us, the U.S. citizens, to forgive him. Today, Ronald Reagan is not remembered for that wrong, but he is remembered as one of the greatest presidents that ever served in the Oval Office. People respect people who say "I'm sorry," and ask for forgiveness.

Someone said: "**He who asks a question remains a fool for five minutes; he who never asks remains a fool forever.**"

## **Eternal Life**

Revisit an insight with me that I mentioned earlier in Chapter Five. Salvation and eternal life in Jesus Christ are gifts from God and cannot be earned by our works, or lost because of a lack of them. Our works stand alone on a different premise and cannot either get us into heaven, nor will the lack of them prevent us from entering. Paul the Apostle said it this way: "I do not set aside {frustrate or confuse} the grace of God: for if righteousness comes through {keeping} the law, then Christ died in vain." (Galatians 2:21) God alone can judge the eternal destiny of the soul. According to Paul's revelation, when we get to heaven, we will be rewarded for our good works, or our works will be burned in the fire if they fail the test. (I Corinthians 3:13)

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## Different Levels and Types of Sin

PONDER THESE THOUGHTS: We have all heard it said, "To God, sin is sin." While this is true, you could equally say that all color is color. We know, however, that there are various shades of color. Some are dominating in appearance and some are very subdued. Some colors really stand out and other colors do not attract attention at all. But, they are colors nevertheless.

In the same light, there are sins that are easily overlooked and seem insignificant, while there are other sins that are much more glaring in their effect on people. Murder, for example, carries a much more severe penalty than petty thievery. This is not only true in our court system, but is also true in the spirit world. People often overlook small sins because they do not always have an immediately perceivable penalty. However, if we believe in the law of retribution, then we cannot ignore the penalty that follows each wrong done. (Galatians 6:7) **Often, because offenses do not carry an immediate reaction, it is easy to go on and forget the deed or excuse our actions in some way.**

Solomon noted in Ecclesiastes 8:11: "Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

It is clear to me that sins that damage other believers and remain unrepented and unreconciled will affect a person's prosperity and health *now in this time*, but will not necessarily keep a person out of heaven. Such sins will not change our destination, but will surely



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people like you would **want them** to treat you. This is the "**straight gate**" and the "**narrow way**." Be the first to do right, and then have faith. This is loving your enemies, blessing them that curse you, doing: "...good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." (Matthew 5:44)

"When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes **even his enemies** to be at peace with him." (Proverbs 16:7) Jesus said: "there are few that find it {the narrow gate which leads to life}." (Matthew 7:14) Turning the other cheek is tough on the carnal man. Practicing the *Golden Rule* is not what we do to get into heaven. We are saved by grace, not works. Going by the "**broad road**" and the "**wide gate**" is **acting in direct opposition** to Jesus' instructions in Matthew 7:12. It is *biting and devouring one another*. (Galatians 5:15) It is hating those that hate you. It is getting even with those that do you harm. It is cursing them that curse you, etcetera. It brings destruction into this earthly life. Jesus warned "...and there are many who go in by it {the broad road}." Read Matthew 7:13-14. You can literally watch it play out in your life and in others' lives. It goes against everything in the carnal man to practice Matthew 7:12. But God designed it to *pay*, not *lose*. **I pray you will do it.**

All sins are judged according to the equal weights in God's bag. Sow much—reap much. Sow little—reap little. Sow badly—reap badly. Sow good seed—reap a good harvest. That principle works both for good deeds or bad deeds. Apparently, the bad crop harvested for bad seeds sown will be destroyed by the mercies of God when an offender asks forgiveness

from the offended. These are sensitive areas on which to meditate, but I believe every child of God can understand this truth with the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

We would all agree that it is easier to repent to God, who is perfect, than to a brother or sister who is imperfect like ourselves; but scripture bears out that is necessary in order to get God's forgiveness, blessing, and favor. **Check with your conscience** and see if someone or some incident keeps coming into your mind as you read this. It doesn't matter how long-standing the issue is. God is so good to quicken our consciences of things that need to be dealt with.

I have had to repent to other people and apologize. I know from experience how humbling it can be. It requires being sensitive to our Godly conscience and, of course, being willing to admit that we were wrong. I really don't think anyone can go through life and not have to deal with this at some time.

### **It's Worth It!**

If repenting to someone has been a problem for you, go ahead, pick up the phone, or write that letter, or send that email; or better yet, go to them face-to-face. You may grimace to do it, but do it! You will feel so much better afterward, and according to Jesus, **it can help your finances and can bring healing to your body**. You might ask them if it would be all right if you could have prayer together. Ask them to pray for you, and then you can also pray for them. **"Pray for one another, that you may be healed."** (James 5:16)

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"Sometimes the truth costs a great deal, but it's always less than the cost of hiding it."

**Ben Cartwright-Bonanza**

(Even the writers of television entertainment acknowledge this truth!)

"He who covers his sins {refuses to face them and deal with them in repentance} **will not prosper**, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have {obtain} mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

God wants you to "...**prosper in all things and be in health**, just as your soul prospers."  
(III John 2.)

God will also give you a clean slate in Heaven, even if you didn't receive forgiveness from the offended person. It will be their loss if they don't forgive you. It will no longer be your problem.

**It's worth it!**



# CHAPTER IX

## A Change In Rules

When we are converted (born again) and brought into the Family of God, we are forgiven of all sin. Our records are clean and clear in heaven. No sins remain unforgiven.

**After we enter the Body of Christ, the rules for forgiveness change.** Hebrews 10:26, speaks of our lives as believers: "*...after we have received the knowledge of the truth...*" As a family member, we must repent to the brother or sister we have offended or transgressed against, in order to obtain forgiveness from God. We must also forgive our brother or sister who offends us when he or she asks for our forgiveness, regardless of the offense. **Isn't that what we want God, our Father, to do for us when we repent?**

### Let It Go!

If you are the offended and you have not received an apology from the offender, **let it go in your spirit.** Examine your heart and do not harbor any unforgiveness. Reject any attitude, hate, or resentment in your heart toward that individual or group of people. It has been aptly stated: "**To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover the prisoner was you.**"

According to Solomon's teaching in Proverbs, if we would rejoice to see our enemy fall (Proverbs 24:17), it would be displeasing to God and cause God to change his attitude of tenderness toward us and

become more tolerant toward the offender. Tell God that you completely forgive that person (or persons) from your heart for that transgression. Should they ask you to forgive them, be gladly willing to tell them they are forgiven. Then, **trust God to make up your loss.**

Read the entire chapter of Deuteronomy 15 for encouragement and insight on this revelation. According to these verses, if we are willing to forgive them from our hearts, then God will make up any losses the offender created. Once you know you have freely forgiven that person or group, and you would tell them so if they asked for forgiveness, you can rest assured that God has forgiven your sins. You do not have to live under guilt or worry about the breach between you and the offender because they refuse to repent and reconcile.

**Just get yourself free!**  
**SELAH!**

# SUMMARY

**Reflect on my purposes for sharing these insights:**

1. To heighten the integrity level of God's people in their dealings with one another!
2. To stir up physical and emotional healing of long-term problems.
3. To open up financial blessings in abundance to God's people that we may lend and not borrow, and be the head and not the tail.
4. To raise the level of respect for Christians in the eyes of the non-Christian world.

**My suggestions for maximum results:**

READ THIS BOOK AND THE SCRIPTURE REFERENCES AGAIN UNTIL THIS POWERFILLED TRUTH GETS INTO YOUR SPIRIT. Then, give this book to a friend, or recommend it to them.

Do you remember this? "WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, STUDY THE INSTRUCTIONS."

***I PRAY FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY, ABUNDANT LIFE AND PROSPERITY TO YOU!***

## PRAYERS

*Fill in the spaces that are applicable to you.*

**Prayer of Forgiveness**

Dear Father God, I come before You now in Jesus' name, in obedience to your word. I freely forgive for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and for the damages, pain, hurt and loss they have caused me. I release \_\_\_\_\_ into Your forgiving hands and I pray that You bless them and forgive them for their failures and offenses. I lay aside all thoughts and motives of vengeance; for You have said that vengeance belongs only to You. I will remember that on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, that I forgave this person (s), and I ask You now by Your mercy and power, to give me the grace to put it behind me. Thank You for forgiving me now of my sins. *Amen.*

**Prayer of Repentance**

Dear Heavenly Father, as I have read the pages of this book, You have reminded to me that I have committed this wrong, or come short in my dealings with \_\_\_\_\_. I am sorry that I have disappointed You and them in this matter. I am guilty of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and I ask You to forgive me. I accept Your forgiveness, and I ask you to give me Your strength and Your wisdom to go to \_\_\_\_\_ and ask their forgiveness, and/or make restitution in any way I am able to do so. I understand that if I repent to them and reconcile this issue, You will also forgive me. I realize that it is important that I also forgive myself. I do that now by Your grace on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and I ask for Your power and mercy to strengthen me to walk closer to You, and to be more cautious in my dealings with my brothers and sisters from this day forward. In Jesus' name and by His grace I pray. *Amen.*

# BIOGRAPHY

**Dr. Gerald Davis** has become known as a “preacher’s preacher” after fifty years of evangelism, pastoring churches, teaching, and crusading internationally. Dr. Davis is truly and clearly a father of the faith. (I Corinthians 4:15)

Born in DeLeon, Texas, to Spirit-filled preachers, Gerald’s grandparents were part of the Azusa Street outpouring; and their legacy lives on in his ministry. Dr. Davis began preaching at age eighteen and has been serving the Lord since his childhood. He received his Doctor of Divinity through Gulf Coast Seminary in Panama City, Florida. An author of several books, some printed in four languages, his work continues to proclaim God’s Word into the new millennium.

Gerald and his wife, Thelma, married early in their youth after becoming teenage sweethearts, and have a longstanding and happy marriage of 52 years. They have two sons and five grandchildren. They make their home in New Caney, Texas.

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Overflowing Cup Ministries, International, Inc. is dedicated to reaching the lost through open-air and auditorium crusades, and instructing the Body of Christ through seminars, revivals, and literature that brings the Word of God to life.

Over the rich history of this ministry, many have been set free from the bondage of debt through Dr. Davis' revelation on *How to Function in This Economy According to Heaven's Economy*. Gerald has a special commission and calling to teach ministries on **DEBT-FREE** living, and to encourage all believers to stand strong in integrity and faith.

**OTHER BOOKS BY DR. GERALD DAVIS  
ARE TITLED:**

*How to Function in This Economy According to Heaven's Economy*

*But, What About Job?*

*My G.O.O.D. (Get Out OF Debt) Bible Companion*

*The Importance of Keeping Up Your Joy Level*

*The Proper Attitude for Hundred-Fold Production*

*15 Most Commonly Asked Questions on Tithing*

Books, and many CDs and DVDs by Dr. Davis on varied subjects are available online in the Bookstore Section at:

*Overflowing Cup Ministries*  
<http://www.geraldavis.org>.