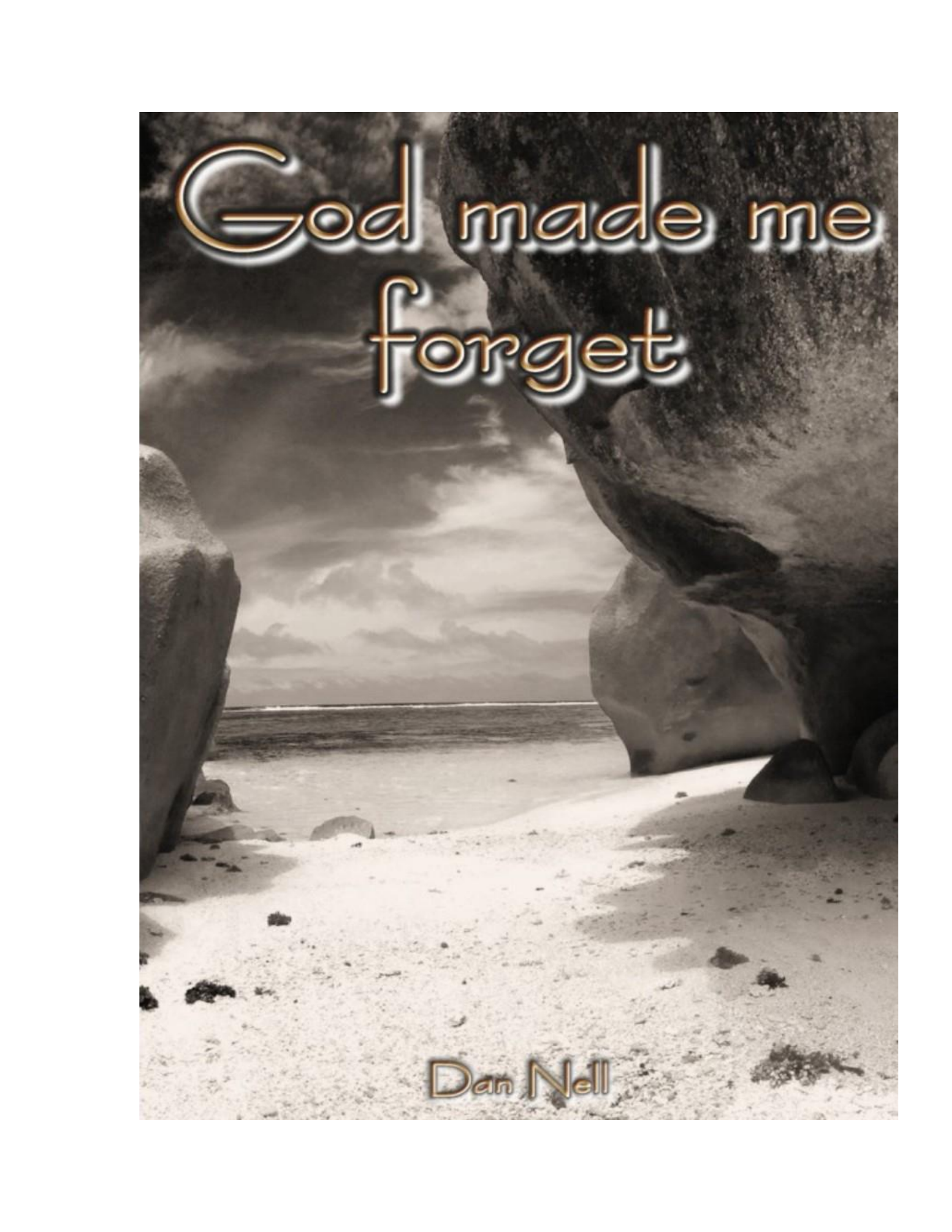


A sepia-toned photograph of a beach scene. Large, dark, craggy rocks frame the left and right sides of the image. In the center, a sandy beach leads to a calm body of water. The sky is filled with heavy, dramatic clouds. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

God made me
forget

Dan Nell

“God made me forget”

**“If you cannot forget your negative past,
you will never overcome”**

The story of Joseph	3
What did Jesus teach on Forgiveness?	11
Testimonies	14
Complete Forgiveness	15

The story of Joseph

The title of this book is found in the story of Joseph.

His story is the story of many today.

There are many people that had a raw deal in life, meaning those that were treated unfairly. But to feel sorry for yourself won't solve your problems. The only thing is to forget the negative past in your life.

I want to use the story of Joseph to help you to become victorious in life.

Joseph came from a big family; 12 sons and one girl.

Joseph was the second youngest of the sons of Jacob.

Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons and made him a tunic of many colours.

The reaction of his brothers was: *"But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him."* (Gen. 37:4)

We will always remember Joseph as the "dreamer"

When he was seventeen years old he had two special dreams.

We read these words in Gen. 37:5

"Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more."

**If you cannot forget
your negative past,
you will never
overcome**

The mistake he made was to tell his exciting dreams to people that hated him.

You should never do this. If you do not have favour with people you cannot share your dreams with them because they will not listen to you. Be very sensitive when you share your dreams with anyone. Sometimes God want us to wait before we tell others what God imparted in our spirit.

The dream he told them was that he saw his brother's sheaves in the field bowed down before his sheaf.

In verse 8 we read about their reaction on this dream: *“And his brothers said to him, ‘Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?’ So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.”*

But because his dreams came from God, the Bible says: *“Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.” (verse 9)*

The meaning of this dream was that his father, mother and eleven brothers should one day bow before him.
His father rebuked him for saying this and his brothers envied him.

Then the story goes on to tell us that his brothers took their father's flock to feed in Shechem and later in Dothan.

Jacob sent Joseph to go and find out how his brothers were doing. But when they saw Joseph “they conspired against him to kill him” They said: *“Look, the dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams!” (verse 19,20)*

But the one brother, Reuben, stopped them doing this and persuaded them to throw him in a pit.

They took his tunic (the one with the many colours) and dipped it in the blood of a goat they killed and then sent it back to their father saying: *“We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son’s tunic?”* Jacob believed that a wild beast has devoured Joseph. He tore his clothes; put on sackcloth and mourned his son’s death for many days”.

Joseph’s brothers sold him to the Midianites, and they again sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. Joseph worked for Potiphar in his house as a slave.

But one day Potiphar’s wife wanted to force Joseph to have sex with her. He ran away from this temptation but she got hold of his jacket (or shirt) and used it to tell her husband that Joseph wanted to force her into having sex. Because of this, Joseph landed in prison.

In Genesis 41 we find that God gave Joseph favour when he interpreted the dream Pharaoh had about the seven fat cows and the seven skinny cows and also his dream about the grains of wheat. In one day God exalted Joseph from prison to be just under the king of Egypt. God can exalt you in one day. Do you believe this?

Why this whole history?

If you were to read Genesis 41 you will find that there came a time in Joseph’s life that God made him forget his negative past.

His negative past was what his brothers did to him and how he landed in prison while he was innocent of all charges against him.

The climax was when his wife gave birth to Manasseh their first born son. The Bible says: *“Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father’s house.”* (Gen. 41:51)

The Living Bible translated this verse as follows: *“Joseph named his oldest son Manasseh meaning ‘Made to forget’ – what he meant was that God had made up to him for all the anguish of his youth, and for the loss of his father’s home.”*

You must first FORGET before you can be FRUITFUL

If you struggle in your life to be successful it is because you haven’t overcome your negative past.

**You must first forget
before you can be
fruitful**

You see, Joseph had to forget his negative past before God could make him fruitful.

We read in verse 52 *“And the name of the second (son) he called Ephraim: For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.”*

What did Joseph have to forget?

He had to forget that his brothers hated him because of his dreams.
He had to forget that his brothers hated him because his father gave him favour and made him a special garment.
He had to forget that his brothers threw him in a pit; sold him as a slave and that he landed innocently in prison.

How do we know that Joseph really forgave his brothers?

Joseph was 17 years of age when he was sold as a slave into Egypt, and 22 years later he revealed himself to his brothers when they came to Egypt to buy grain.

We read this striking story in Gen. 45:1-5

“Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out ‘Make everyone go out from me!’ So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of

Pharaoh heard it. Then Joseph said to his brothers: 'I am Joseph; does my father still live?' But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. And Joseph said to his brothers: 'Please come near to me' so they came near. Then he said: 'I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.'

Joseph could say these words because God made him forget his negative past and make him fruitful in being someone God used to save the nations of Egypt in a time of famine.

After Joseph's father died we read these words in Gen. 50:15

"When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said: Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him"

They fell on their face before him and begged for mercy

His reaction is written down in verses 20,21: *"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones. And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."*

In Rom. 8:26 Paul says: *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."*

God takes the "good" things in life but also the "bad" things and let it all work together for our good. Believe this.

All things work together for good

How did God help him to forget?

God helped Joseph to forget and healed his brokenness through the birth of Manasseh

One wonderful thing about a birth is that it has no “past” but just a “future”

A birth has power to draw people.

I still remember how some people in a small town did not want to relate to me and my wife because we had different spiritual beliefs to them.

But the first week after our youngest son was born; many of them came to visit us to see the new born child. This was in the first week after our son’s birth that they became our friends, even until today.

God helped me to forget my negative past when my eldest son Daniel was born on the 25th January 1960.

I gave my life to Christ at the age of 16 years. But the devil told me that one day my first-born child will be crippled because of all the sins I had done in my life. Can you believe that? Years later, when Helen and I pastured our first church our first son was born. When the matron gave me this son to hold in my hands I opened the blankets around him and checked his whole body.

Thank God there was nothing wrong with him!

I ran down the passage with our baby to see my wife and tell her that because of this birth I was set totally free from the guilt of the past. God forgave me years ago but I was only set free in my mind through the birth of my son. Thank God for that.

I pray that through a “spiritual birth” worked by God’s Spirit that you will be set free of your bad past!

A Spiritual birth will set you free of your bad past

Paul had to forget

In Philippians 3:13 he wrote these words: *“but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.”*

Paul had to forget how he agreed with the crowd that stoned Stephen (Acts 7:54-60)

Paul had to forget how he persecuted the first Christians by dragging them out of their homes while they were worshipping God and putting them in prison.

You will only forget your negative past if you can forgive

- You forgive because Jesus said you should
In the Lord's Prayer Jesus taught us to pray:
"Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us" (Luke 11:4)
The Amplified Bible says: "And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive every one who is indebted to us – who has offended us or done us wrong;"
- You forgive because if you don't want to do this you will never be able to "move your mountains"
We tend only to read Mark 11:23,24 where Jesus said that we can move our mountains if we can believe. But we should also read verse 25 that says: *"but when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your father in heaven will forgive you your sins to."*
- You don't forgive people because they deserve to be forgiven. But you forgive because that's the only way that you will be set free.
Jesus said in Luke 6:37 *"Forgive and you will be forgiven."*
The Living Bible says: "Go easy on others; then they will do the same for you."

A stories to tell

I met a Christian lady that was chronically ill for 40 years. I asked her if there were people that she could not forgive? Her answer was: *"Yes, for 40 years"*

I encouraged her to contact them (those that were still alive) and forgive them. This she did in a week.

Six months later when I attended her funeral I heard that the whole family said that she was healed in that week and was changed into a wonderful soft-hearted woman they had never known before. She could have been like that for 40 years!

What did Jesus teach on forgiveness?

In Matt. 18:15 tot 35 we find the following teaching Jesus gave on forgiveness:

Verse 15 “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.”

The first thing you have to do when you feel that somebody has wronged you, is to go to that person alone and talk to him/her about the problem you have between both of you.

**Talk to those
that wronged
you**

Remember to “talk” about it and not to “fight” about it.

Verse 16 “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (You will also find this in Deut. 17:6)

If you want to make peace between you and somebody and they don’t want to listen to you, then you must take a witness with you to try and sort out your problems.

Verse 17 “And if he refuses to hear them (these witnesses) tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”

Jesus uses the expression “a heathen and a tax collector” not telling us not to have anything to do with those that did not desire to make peace with us, but to tell us to try and win those back to Christ.

In verses 21,22 Peter asked Jesus the following: “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? up to seven times? Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’”

This is altogether 490 times! In Luke 17:4 Jesus said that we should forgive seven times a day! He said these words: *“And if he (your fellow man) sins against you seven times a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent’ you shall forgive him.”*

Then Jesus tells the story of the Unforgiving Servant.

This is all about a king that forgave the debt of one of his servants that could not pay. At first the king wanted to sell him, his wife and children, but he begged for mercy. The king was moved with compassion and forgave him his debt.

But this same servant went out and got hold of another servant (by the throat) and said that he should pay him what he owed him. His fellow servant also asked for mercy but did not get it. Rather he was thrown in prison till he should pay his debt.

Matt. 18:31 to 35 “So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had on you? And the master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

God has freely forgiven our debt; therefore, we should also forgive others.

If you are not willing to forgive you will be given over to “torturers” Whatever this means, it is that “painful” things will come over you because you were not willing to forgive.

Decide today to forgive!

**You will experience pain
if you cannot forgive**

I remember preaching my first sermon on Matt. 18:15-35 in a church in Bloemfontein, way back in 1982.

For the next four months people were confessing to each other all the things they had against each other, and even against the church. God gave us a mighty revival and that church grew in a wonderful way!

What God did in Ladybrand

I had to help a small church of less than a hundred people to be reconcile. For five weeks I had 86 house visitations trying to get the members to make peace with each other and to develop a bigger hunger for God.

We started with 3 people in the Prayer meeting and not more than 30 in the Sunday service. The church had an income of R4000 per month. Their total debt was R48000.

After five weeks God did a miracle: The church members made peace; many new believers came to Christ and we had up to 400 people in a church service.

Adding to this, their debt was paid and they even gave me double the amount that they planned to give me before I came. This is the Lord!

Can I tell you what happened to the lady in Kiev, after my teaching on Forgiveness in a Bible School?

While I was teaching on Complete Forgiveness a women was set free of guilt.

Her name was Alla and she told me through my Russian interpreter that her father who lived in Moscow wanted her and her two children to come and stay with him. This was a few years ago. She did not want to do this because she lived with her mother in Kiev in a very nice and comfortable apartment.

Her father had a stroke that same day and died eleven days later in a hospital.

Ever since this the lady had guilt and felt she was to blame for his death. While I was teaching on Forgiveness she forgave herself there in the classroom and was set free of all guilt. Isn't this wonderful?

You see, God through His Spirit gave a new "birth" in her heart and helped her to forget her negative past. God wants to do this for you too.

IF YOU WANT COMPLETE FORGIVENESS THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU SHOULD DO:

FIRSTLY: You must get forgiveness from the Lord for your own sins.

You may ask: How can I receive forgiveness for my sins?

First accept that you have sinned

Then ask Jesus to forgive you of all your sins and to cleanse you with his wonderful blood.

Yes, tell Jesus that you are sorry for sinning!

I did this more than 50 years ago and I still remember how He changed my life completely.

Take note of this scripture

1 John 1: 7, 9 “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, *and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses from all sin.*”

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

If blood does not reach a certain part of our body, that part will die. If Jesus’ blood does not flow through your life, spiritually you will die. And the only way to get His blood to cleanse your soul and mind is to confess your sins with all of your heart.

SECONDLY: Forgive YOURSELF

As the devil accused *Joshua the high priest* before God, so the devil accuses us before God. (Zech. 3:1-5)

Revelation 12: 10: “Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven. Now Salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.” Can you see that the devil is the “accuser”?

Never help the devil in his dirty work by accusing others as well as yourself before God.

God forgives and forgets

Remember that once God has forgiven you, your sinful past does not exist anymore.

Take time to meditate on the following scriptures, and believe them!

Colossians 2:13 “He forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges proved against you, the list of His commandments which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ’s cross.” (The Living Bible)

Psalms 103:12 “As far as the East is from the West, so far has He removed our sins from us.”

You may find the North and South Pole but there is no spot on earth where you will find East or West.

Jeremiah 31:34 “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

If God forgets our sin, we must also forget it

If God doesn’t remember my sins after He has forgiven me, you and I mustn’t remember them either.
So, please forgive yourself!

Micah 7:19

“ You will again have compassion on us; You will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. “

It literally means that God feels sorry for us, tramples on our sins, and throws them into the deep sea.

Jeremiah 31:34

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

If God doesn't remember them, you and I mustn't remember them either.

If God Himself can forget our forgiven sins, He can also help you to forget.

But how can you forget if you keep that letter to use against someone; or the negative notes in that book, or even that conversation on tape? Destroy all those things so that you truly can forget, otherwise you will keep on reminding yourself about all the things you don't want to remember.

You ask: “What must I do if the old wrong thoughts come back?”

Colossians 3: 1,2

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things”

Fill your mind with good things.

QUESTION: WHAT HAPPENS IF I SIN AGAIN ?

1 John 2: 1; “My little children, these things I write you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

As Christians we should not sin. But if you sin you can once again go to Jesus for forgiveness. His grace is more than enough. Believe this.

**THIS BRINGS US TO THE THIRD MATTER NAMELY:
FORGIVE ALSO YOUR FELLOW MAN.**

To fully participate in forgiveness it's necessary to receive forgiveness from God and forgive yourself, but it's definitely also necessary to forgive others. (Remember the story I explained in Matt. 18:23-35.)

TO SUMMARIZE: GET COMPLETE FORGIVENESS

- ❑ **Ask God to forgive you.**
- ❑ **Forgive yourself**
- ❑ **Forgive your spouse; your parents and your teacher**
- ❑ **Forgive that person that defrauded you.**

Discover COMPLETE FORGIVENESS and live a life of overflowing joy.