

# The Therapy of Forgiveness

When I first met my husband, Jim, he was a man with a past. For the prior 15 years he had been a heroin addict on the streets of Chicago, involved in every kind of sin imaginable. He had been an alcoholic as well, and to support his addictive lifestyle he had become a criminal, spending much time in jail. He had married and divorced not once, but four times.

On January 21, 1972, Jim knelt before the Lord and prayed a very simple prayer: "God, I don't know much about you, but if you'll make me happy like these Christians here [at Chicago Teen Challenge], I'll do anything you want me to do."

God administered His therapy of forgiveness, and when we said our vows on June 2, 1972, I married a brand-new creature in Christ.

I thank God that I don't have to get up every morning in fear of finding used hypodermic needles in my sink. I don't have to check the garbage for empty whiskey bottles. I have never walked into my living room to find stolen goods, nor have I, even once, felt condemned by the sin of adultery for marrying a divorced man.

Because I didn't.

I didn't marry a heroin addict. I didn't marry an alcoholic. I didn't marry a criminal. I didn't marry a divorced man. I married a brand-new baby saint. All God remembered about Jim Dycus is what he has done

since January 21,  
1972. He is a man with no past.

One of the greatest gifts God ever gave to humankind is His  
therapy of forgiveness. Without it we would live in a constant  
state of guilt  
that could never be removed.

A load of guilt bound Jim to a 15-year drug addiction.  
Hospitals and rehabilitation programs couldn't remove it.  
Countless  
psychologists and psychiatrists couldn't point the way to  
clear conscience. It  
was a bondage that only God's therapy of forgiveness could  
eradicate from his  
life.

You know Robert Louis Stevenson's story of Jekyll and Hyde.  
Dr. Jekyll stood at his laboratory table one evening, holding  
a vial of a  
chemical that he had created. He believed it had a potential  
for good. Since  
both his assistant and his dog had made a mad dash for the  
door when they saw  
the vial, no one was there to test it. So he decided to test  
it on himself.

Almost immediately Dr. Jekyll turned into the raging Mr.  
Hyde and went out into the street creating havoc. When the  
effects of the drug  
began to wear off, he stumbled back into his laboratory and  
once again grasped  
that vial of chemical in his hand.

At that moment he was faced with the most important decision  
he would ever make. He could dash the vial against the wall  
and destroy its  
potential for evil; or he could experiment further to see if

he could find a  
good use for the chemical it contained.

Dr. Jekyll chose foolishly. He kept the vial. Each time he experimented he became a more violent Mr. Hyde. Finally he lost the ability to  
turn back into the intelligent and humane Dr. Jekyll.

We have the same choice to make about our pasts. No good thing will ever come of hanging on to the record we have of former sins. Doing  
so will only hinder us and destroy our potential for fulfilling God's design  
for us. We must choose to turn our backs on the past and stretch forth to the  
bright, new future that God has for us through His therapy of forgiveness. This  
is the way the apostle Paul approached his imperfection: "One thing I do,  
forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things  
which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of  
God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:3-13-14, NKJV).

Paul had received the therapy of forgiveness for some of the most heinous crimes we can imagine. He knew the truth of Jesus' words, "If the  
Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36, KJV).

#### **PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 10-24-2011**

This week, forget those things which are behind and reach toward what is ahead for you. Thank the Lord for a fresh start every morning.  
Continue to seek guidance for new opportunities to serve Him by serving others.

Remember those who have lost jobs and pray for provision and new doors of employment for them. Start praying for the upcoming elections and remember those who serve us in all facets of government and civil service. Continue to pray for Israel, our allies and military. Thank God for His protection over our nation, and ask Him to pour out His Spirit, bring revival to our churches and heal the land. John 8:36; Phil 3:3-13-14

*To enrich your prayer life and learn how to strategically pray with power by using appropriate scriptures, we recommend the following sources by Apostle John Eckhardt: Prayers that Rout Demons, Prayers that Bring Healing, Prayers that Release Heaven on Earth and Prayers that Break Curses. To order any or all of these [click here](#).*