

## GUILT

By Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

In Phil. 3:13 Paul says, " *I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" I would like to concentrate on the word "forgetting." Paul certainly had much to forget. We do not know how many he commanded to be killed and his early life was filled with bloodshed, hatred and acts of evil. He does not stop to remember the failures of his life, nor the sins against God. He rather laid all this past at the feet of Christ and was forgiven. He put it all out of his mind and presses further to be used of God in every way possible. There is a great lesson to be learned. Who among us have not failed in our walk for God? Paul did not dwell on past failures but committed them to the Lord and pressed on to further service. I am reminded of a small boy who's cat was killed by a car. After a neighborhood , kid attended funeral, he buried it in the corner of the garden. His father discovered it days later from the tail blowing in the breeze. Questioned, the boy said he left the tail out so he could come back now and then and pull the cat up to see how he was doing. We laugh but this is the procedure of many today.

Sins confessed and forgiven go behind the back of God, in the depths of the sea; never to be remembered against us again. What God has forgiven should be left buried and not dug up and rehashed. I counsel nightly with those who simply cannot forget what happened to them or what they did. We are all counseled by I John 1:9 to "confess our sin". We are then to carry that confession to those wronged. If the sin is

between you and God that is as far as is needed for forgiveness and a complete wipe out of the transgression. If past wrongs included others then they should be sought out and forgiveness sought so healing can result. Jesus taught, "*If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*" Matt 5:23,24. The child of God to be further used must make things right with offended ones. The sin is blotted from the record of God and the believer is to get on about the Fathers business.

Today's psychologists and psychiatrists are having a field day taking people back into their past to unearth wrongs Crooked lawyers are making a killing by dredging everything possible on those who have wronged others. Headlines scream of past actions and the world enjoys the revelations and humiliation thus caused. Millions are made at the expense of the stumbles of others who are held up to ridicule. Certainly neither the one wronged not the one accused are helped by the exposure.

Believers must take a different path of restoration.. All wrongs on the part of believers must be made right. Great ole' time revivals were characterized by tears and getting right with each other The case is closed and washed away by the forgiving blood of Christ Faith demands we leave it there. Any further needed action is in the hands of God "*for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ*" II Cor. 5:10 We preachers and counselors must remember" *if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted*" Gal 6:1. These are loving words that are the best of advice.

Let us all lovingly correct any past wrongs and with the wronged after confession leave the transgressions of the past under the blood. If God forgives, and He certainly does then we Christians should do the same. Remember if we won't forgive them, He won't forgive us.

Let us strive as a family to get along. Leave the tail buried and don't dig up past wrongs. No church argument is worth hurting your church. Your pastor is human but also the leader of the divine. Love the men of God and help them lead in the lifetime service God has given them. Brothers and sisters will quarrel but we must stand together and leave the final results with God. It is human to err, healing to forgive, right to ask forgiveness and blessed to walk on together in His service. We are almost there. Let's keep going.