

# THE PENTECOST

ISSUE #36 September 2009



# THE PENTECOST



*Hello, and a warm welcome back to The Pentecost magazine after our summer break! You may, or may not, know that The Pentecost is a part of a ministry called Zion Christian Ministry. We have a statement of faith and would like to make known to you our core beliefs. In this issue, we also have an article on the importance of forgiveness, written by my father-in-law, Jake Balzer. As well, we have some testimonies from the Azusa Street Revival, a great revival which broke out in Los Angeles in 1906. Our magazine has run articles on Azusa in the past and we plan to include more Azusa material in this year`s issues as well. We hope that the testimonies of God working at Azusa will encourage you to seek God for revival in our day. God bless you.*

**Shawn Stevens**

*Yes, welcome back. I encourage you to check out our web site, written below. It's always changing. We welcome questions or comments about our ministry. I pray that it is a blessing to you. God bless!*

**Ramona Stevens**



**Zion**  
Christian Ministry

Shawn Stevens  
Ramona Stevens

Mailing Address Phone 604.854.8141  
P.O. Box 933, Email info@zionchristianministry.com  
Lynden, WA 98264 USA ZionChristianMinistry.com

## IN THIS ISSUE

**STATEMENT OF FAITH OF ZION  
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY..... 3 - 5**

**TESTIMONIES FROM THE AZUSA  
STREET REVIVAL ..... 6-7**

**TO FORGIVE OR NOT TO FORGIVE! IT'S  
YOUR CHOICE ..... 8**

## STATEMENT OF FAITH OF ZION CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

### WE BELIEVE ...

#### THE BIBLE

That the Bible is God's Word. It is comprised of sixty-six books. It is ultimately authored and inspired by God; "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, ..." (2 Timothy 3:16). God's prophets spoke as He gave them utterance (see 2 Peter 1:20-21).

That the Bible's canon is complete as:

#### Old Testament:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

#### New Testament:

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Revelation

That the Bible is the final authority on all doctrine and Christian practice; "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," (2 Timothy 3:16). (See also Acts 17:11 and John 17:17).

That the Bible is to be believed and obeyed by all humanity.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105).

#### THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

1. That there is one God (Isaiah 45:21, 43:10). God exists as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Father (John 14:7-11; Galatians 1:1-3); our Father (Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:2).

The Son (Hebrews 1:1-9); also referred to with other names (John 1:1, 14, John 20:28-29; 2 Peter 1:1; Acts 20:28).

The Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-4, Acts 13:2).

2. That God is self-existent - His life is not sustained by someone or something outside of Himself (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 43:10).

3. That God is personal - He has a mind, will, and emotions (Isaiah 1:18; Romans 12:2; 1 John 4:8-9; John 3:16).

4. That God is eternal - He has no beginning and has no ending (Psalm 90:2; Genesis 21:33; Psalm 102:27).

5. That God is omnipresent - He is not confined to time and space (1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23, 24).

6. That God is omniscient - He knows all things (Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20; Psalm 147:5).

7. That God is omnipotent - He is all-powerful (Job 42:1-2; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Psalm 115:3; Revelation 19:6).

8. That God is holy (Psalm 99:9; Isaiah 6:1-5, 30:15, 43:14, 57:15; Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16; Revelation 15:4).

9. That God is righteous and just (Exodus 9:27; Psalm 97:2, 89:14, 145:17; Isaiah 45:21; John 17:25; Revelation 15:3).

10. That God is loving and merciful (1 John 4:8; Jeremiah 31:3; Isaiah 63:9; Romans 5:8; Deuteronomy 4:31; Psalm 136, 103:8; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 3:5).

11. That God is truthful (John 14:6; Exodus 34:6; Titus 1:2; Isaiah 65:16).

#### THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

1. That man and woman were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

2. That men and women are created subordinate to God and a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8:5).

3. That they are made for God (Ezekiel 18:4) and to have communion with Him (2 Corinthians 13:14).

4. That their constitution is both material and immaterial. They have a spirit, a soul and a body (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The body is the material part of their being; their soul and spirit are the immaterial parts of their being.

5. That the first man, Adam, rebelled against God and that through him sin was brought into the world (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12). The sinful nature of Adam is also experienced by mankind and that when a man or woman yields to that sinful nature, they have sinned (see James 1:14-15). The result of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Mankind experiences three modes of death; physical death (Acts 5:1-5), spiritual death (Ephesians 2:1-5) and eternal death (Jude 1:7).

#### THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S WORK

1. That Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15; Luke 19:10). His work of doing this was to die a sacrificial death on behalf of sinful mankind, and to three days later rise again from the dead (Luke 18:31-33).

2. That Jesus' death was sacrificial for He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and His death was on our behalf for our redemption is through His blood (Ephesians 1:7).

3. That Jesus rose from the dead three days later (Luke 24:3-8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Mark 16:6). Jesus' resurrection affirms His Lordship (Romans 14:9).

4. That Christ both died physically and was raised from the dead physically (John 2:19-22, 20:24-28; Luke 24:36-39).

#### THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

That salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit, regenerating and renewing a man or woman (Titus 3:5-6). Salvation is a born-again experience where a person is converted and delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of God's Son (John 3:5-8; Colossians 1:13). When a person is born-again, they have become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) and a child of God (John 1:11-13; Romans 8:15-16).

God begins the work of salvation with conviction. Conviction is when a man or woman is brought into deep awareness of their personal sin (John 16:8-11; Acts 2:37).

From conviction, we then must come to contrition. Contrition is remorse and sorrow for our sin. It is a deep regret for what we have done against God and our fellow man (Psalm 32:3-5; Luke 22:62; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11).

"The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit." (Psalm 34:18).

After we have come to contrition, we must then repent (Mark 6:12; Acts 17:30). Repentance is a decision to turn, with the help of God, from a life of sin to a life of obedience toward God. Our life of wickedness must be forsaken and God must be embraced. God's great desire is that men repent (Luke 15:7; 2 Peter 3:9). There is an outworking of the holy life in the personal life of a Christian. Repentance is not a promise to be instantly perfect; it is a commitment to follow God in everything and every step that He leads us in.

"Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7).

Along with repentance, we must come to God by faith (1 Peter 1:8-9; Ephesians 3:17). Faith is believing in the truth of the Gospel, that Jesus died in our place and rose again (1 Corinthians 15: 1-4) and it is believing and trusting in Jesus Christ Himself (Acts 20:20-21). It is actively believing and trusting in the person of Jesus Christ Himself for salvation. Faith is establishing a personal relationship with Christ. A personal relationship with Christ can be established by coming to Him in prayer and acknowledging to Him that you are a sinner, expressing to Him your remorse for sin and asking Him to forgive you, declaring to Him that you believe that He died for you, that He rose from the dead for you, and that you will turn from your own way to follow His will, recognizing Him as the Lord of your life (see Romans 10:13).

That there is salvation in no other name but Jesus, by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

## BAPTISM

That after being born-again, we are to be baptized in water (see Acts 10:44-48).

Jesus Christ commanded His followers to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). The Bible calls "the doctrine of baptisms" one of the "elementary principles" of the Christian faith (see Hebrews 6:1-2).

That there is a condition to being baptized - we must believe with all our heart (Acts 8:36-37).

That baptism is for those who are born-again. It is an outward symbol of an inward truth. It is a testimony of our faith in Jesus Christ and what He has done.

When the person being baptized is brought down into the water it symbolizes Jesus Christ being brought down into death, and symbolizes that we have died too. We have died to our old life of self-rule. When the person is brought up out of the water it symbolizes Christ resurrecting from death into life, and symbolizes that we have been born from the dead, that is, "born-again".

Full immersion is the only method of water baptism that is used in the Bible. The Greek word, *baptisma* {bap'-tis-mah} Baptizo means, of Christian baptism; a rite of immersion in water as commanded by Christ, by which one after confessing his sins and professing his faith in Christ, having been born again by the Holy Spirit unto a new life, identifies publicly with the fellowship of Christ and the church<sup>1</sup>. Sprinkling and infant baptism were not practiced during biblical times.

That water baptism should follow conversion, immediately or soon after (See examples Acts 9:1-18, 10:44-48, 16:25-34).

That water baptism is important as it is a public testimony of personal faith. Christ calls us to take a public stand for Him (Matthew 10:32).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16).

The Bible also teaches the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5).

This baptism did not end in apostolic times but is an experience for Christians today. This experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion.

## THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

That there is a diversity of spiritual gifts present in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4) and that they are for the benefit of all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills." (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)

That Christ gives some in His body to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11-12).

## THE CHURCH

That Christ founded a Church (Matthew 16:18) and that He is the Head of that Church (Ephesians 5:23). The universal Church is comprised of all believers worldwide. The local Church is a community of believers which gathers in Jesus' name. This community is a place where God's love is felt and shared. It is a place of worship, prayer and ministry.

Shawn Stevens

<sup>1</sup> Strong's, James, LL.D., S.T.D. The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1996).

Scripture taken from The New King James Version. Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## TESTIMONIES FROM THE AZUSA STREET REVIVAL

The Azusa Street Revival was a great revival which broke out in one of Los Angeles' poorer districts in 1906. From the revival streamed testimony after testimony of changed lives, lives changed by the power of God. Here are some of the testimonies recorded in print. I pray that God will use them to speak to you and me.

A Mr. Tom Anderson testified:

*Beloved, I was saved about seventeen months ago from a wretched life. When I called on God, He heard my prayer and saved me instantly. What convinced me of the reality in salvation, was the peace that came into my heart.... And God has healed my body after being afflicted over six and a half years. When all physicians failed, the man Christ Jesus healed me.... But, beloved, God sent His transforming power through the blood of Jesus and burst all the shackles, and shook off the handcuffs of hell, and today I am a free man in Christ Jesus. Then He sanctified me wholly and gave me a clean heart. Then He baptized me with the Holy Ghost in January 22, at Azusa mission. Dear ones, all I live for is Christ. I sold out, body, soul, and spirit to Him. My desire is to point souls to the bleeding Lamb of Calvary that takes away the sin of the world. The Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, speaks through me in the languages of the nations whenever He chooses to and He is now engaged in pulling the rope which rings the joybells of heaven in my heart. And there is a revival going on in my soul continuously, and the choir singing and praising God in the unknown tongues.<sup>1</sup>*

Tom Anderson was transformed from living a wretched life to living a life of peace. He was baptized with the Holy Ghost. As a result of his experience, a revival was birthed in his soul and he was filled with a desire to point people to Jesus Christ. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for young and old alike. A Mr. Campbell testified of having received this experience at age eighty-three. Viola Price, a young girl, received this experience at age eight.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Lucy Leatherman tells of her experience:

*... I praised and praised God and saw my Saviour in the heavens. And as I praised, I came closer and closer, and I was so small. By and by I swept into the wound in His side, and He was not only in me but I in Him, and there I found that rest that passeth all understanding, and He said to me, you are in the bosom of the Father. He said I was clothed upon and in the secret place of the Most High. But I said, Father, I want the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the heavens opened and I was overshadowed, and such power came upon me and went through me. He said, Praise Me, and when I did, angels came and ministered unto me. I was passive in His hands, and by the eye of faith I saw angel hands working on my vocal chords, and I realized they were loosing me. I began to praise Him in an unknown language.<sup>3</sup>*

These testimonies are similar to that of Mr. Burke who testified that at the revival, as he was praying:

*I asked the Lord to put the Holy Ghost on me, and it came like the outpouring of water on the crown on my head and it went through my entire body to the very tips of my toes and fingers and my heart seemed to expand ten times larger. Then something rushed through me like I was under a faucet. It was the Holy Ghost and the next thing I knew, something began to get hold of my jawbones and tongue. I said, Lord whether I ever speak in tongues or not, I want the baptism with the Holy Ghost as they had it on the day of Pentecost. I went home and it seemed a music band of a thousand instruments was set up within me. The next morning it was singing in my soul. 'The power, the power, the Pentecostal power, is just the same today.' I was singing in the yard and my wife was singing it in the kitchen. It has not stopped yet.<sup>4</sup>*

So we see that the joy that Mr. Burke found was an inward joy, created by God. The Los Angeles Times tells the story of a Jewish rabbi named Gold, who apparently held positions in some of the largest synagogues in the United States. Gold visited the revival, was healed of an ailment, and became a convert.<sup>5</sup> A Mr. Rosa testifies of coming to the Azusa Revival with much skepticism. After several days of attendance, he said that he obtained "a real hunger in my soul" and then, one evening, was struck by the power of God. He states further:

*I was under the power of God for about an hour and a half, and it was there that all pride, and self, and conceit disappeared, and I was really dead to the world, for I had Christ within in His fullness. I was baptized with the Holy Ghost and spoke in a new tongue. I praise God for the light, and now I am walking in it. The desire of my heart is to see every man and woman that preaches the gospel of Christ, baptized with the Holy Ghost...<sup>6</sup>*

It is beautiful to see that his experience was not an end in itself. In his experience, God broke down his pride and his love for worldly things, and he was aware of the presence of Christ within him. Another individual who testified of spiritual hunger, and subsequent transformation after his experience with the Holy Spirit, was the Reverend H. L. Blake. In his own words:

*I commenced to go down before the Lord, the hunger increased from day to day and was intensified so that I cried out from the depths of my soul, in the language of scripture, 'As the heart panteth after the water brooks so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.' After about two weeks, earnestly seeking at the altar and in secret prayer, with other means as the Holy Spirit led, on Feb. 25, the Lord baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire, and spoke through me in an unknown tongue as the Spirit gave utterance. ... Some may ask the question, What have you more than you had before you received your Pentecost [another term, here meaning, the baptism of the Holy Spirit]? I have far greater liberty and Divine unction on me in dealing with souls, and there has come into my life an overflow of love and joy with a*

*deep settled peace planted in the depths of my soul, a something that is inexpressible and indescribable. To God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost be all the praise and glory forever.*<sup>7</sup>

Here Blake testified that, after this experience, his ministry had greater Divine unction. He was transformed by receiving an overflow of love, joy and peace for which he could only praise God.

Another minister testified of the Holy Spirit coming upon him. Immediately, he began speaking in tongues and we are further told:

*He is filled with divine love. His family were first afraid to see him speaking in tongues, thinking he had lost his mind, but when his wife and children felt the sympathy and divine love which the Holy Ghost puts in people's hearts, they said, 'Papa was never so sane in his life.'*<sup>8</sup>

The direct result of this minister's baptism in the Holy Spirit was of him being filled with divine love. This love shone through him and was felt by his family.

Countless people testified of being touched and changed by God in a dramatic way.

Azusa represented more than just a move of God; it was a restoration of the Church to its New Testament beginnings. William J. Seymour announced it as standing for "...the restoration of the faith once delivered unto the saints – the old time religion, camp meetings, revivals, missions, street and prison work and Christian unity everywhere."<sup>9</sup> In another article of *The Apostolic Faith*, he said; "All along the ages men have been preaching a partial gospel. A part of the gospel remained when the world went into the dark ages." The article continues; "Now, He is bringing back the Pentecostal baptism to the church."<sup>10</sup> The Azusa people referred to their revival as the "latter rain," taken from Joel 2.23. They taught that the "early rain" had fallen on the Early Church and they were now experiencing the latter rain. They viewed the experience of the Early Church and the experience of the Azusa Revival like two great bookends on the Church Age.

The Azusa Street Revival may have become well known but Pastor Seymour and the countless visitors who were touched by God's Spirit were not looking for fame; rather, they were intent upon one thing, meeting God. God not only met with them, but restored to them the New Testament experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the Azusa Street Revival people were transformed. Among those men and women there were many who came into the meetings proud but left the meetings humble, testifying that they had been filled with the love of God. People who are filled with the love of God have love to give to others, and it becomes their joy and purpose to share their experience. The story of their experiences gives reason for hope in the hearts of those who long for revival in our present day.

<sup>1</sup>Tom Anderson, quoted in "Pentecostal Testimonies" *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 6, February – March 1907 (Los Angeles: The Apostolic Faith Mission), 8.

<sup>2</sup> Florence Crawford, ed., "The Old-Time Pentecost" *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 1, September, 1906 (Los Angeles: The Apostolic Faith Movement), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Lucy Leatherman, quoted in "Pentecostal Experience" *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 3, November, 1906 (Los Angeles: The Pacific Apostolic Faith Movement), 4.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.11.

<sup>5</sup>"Weird Babel Of Tongues" *The Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1906.

<sup>6</sup>Adolph Rosa, quoted in "A Portuguese Minister Receives His Pentecost" *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 2, October, 1906 (Los Angeles: The Apostolic Faith Movement), 1.

<sup>7</sup>H. L. Blake, "A Minnesota Preacher's Testimony" *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 6, February – March 1907 (Los Angeles: The Apostolic Faith Mission), 5

<sup>8</sup>Florence Crawford, ed., *The Apostolic Faith* Vol. 1, No. 1, September 1906 (Los Angeles: The Apostolic Faith Movement), 2.

<sup>9</sup>William Seymour, quoted in Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission And Revival* (Nashville: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2006), 120.

<sup>10</sup>William Seymour, quoted in Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission And Revival* (Nashville: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2006), 122.

## TO FORGIVE OR NOT TO FORGIVE ! IT'S YOUR CHOICE

Henri Nouwen defines forgiveness as " love practised among people who love poorly."

Someone has said that forgiveness is the bread of daily life. Whenever people who care for each other live close together, forgiveness becomes the most needed ingredient of their lives. Caring people need forgiveness more than people who don't care. People who love each other and who stumble over each other's feet must eat the bread of forgiveness together.

Loving each other is mentioned a great deal in Christian circles. But forgiving each other seems not to be mentioned too often. Peter was quite honest when he wanted to know from Jesus as to how often he should forgive his brother.

Imagine with me that I have a piece of paper in my hand. There are two sides to this piece of paper. But when I fold the paper in half I have four sides. Now the piece of paper represents one concept, namely FORGIVENESS. The four sides represent four sides of forgiveness.

### I. Experiencing God's forgiveness

In a real sense the need for forgiveness involves the suffering of the innocent.

In 1 John 1:9 it says " If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (KJ Version).

According to the above verse God is the offended one and we are the offenders. Nevertheless God took the initiative to provide and extend forgiveness to us. Thereby He has extended forgiveness to us even before we recognized our need for it. Once we have experienced God's forgiveness by repenting of our sins and by faith receiving Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we will continue to need God's forgiveness when we sin. Recognizing our daily need for God's forgiveness which cost Him His only Son, we will then learn how to apply the next side of forgiveness

### 2. Learning how to regularly forgive yourselves

It is surprising how many followers of Christ really struggle with forgiving themselves. Forgiving yourself does not mean excusing yourself for the wrong you have done, but rather by faith accepting God's forgiveness and then forgiving yourself. Failing to forgive ourselves implies we still need to punish ourselves for the sins God has forgiven and forgotten. Learning to live in God's forgiveness daily will enable us to learn to forgive ourselves and move on to greater effectiveness in serving our Lord and relating to others

### 3. Experiencing the forgiveness of others.

To be honest with ourselves we soon realize that we need the forgiveness of others on a regular basis. It has been somewhat surprising to me when I realized the need to ask others for forgiveness, how that actually builds credit with them when they realize I'm taking my life seriously and want to continue to be an integral person both with them and with my Savior. It is advisable when we seek the forgiveness of others that we pay specific attention to defining the exact wrong we have done before asking them for forgiveness. Mutual

forgiveness strengthens our relationship with one another and is a positive testimony to non-believers.

### 4. Learning to forgive others

Personally this is one area where I have had some very serious struggles. Upon further reflection I discovered the real need to follow through on the first three sides of forgiveness first and then learn to forgive others. Ephesians 4:32 encourages us to follow through on genuinely forgiving others as in Christ God has forgiven us. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (NIV Version).

Years after her experience in a Nazi concentration camp, Corrie ten Boom found herself standing face to face with one of the most cruel and heartless German guards she had met while in the camps. This man had humiliated and degraded both her and her sister, staring at them and visually "raping" them as they stood in the delousing showers.

Now he stood before her with an outstretched hand, asking "Will you forgive me?" Corrie said, " I stood there with coldness clutching at my heart, but I know that the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart. I prayed, "Jesus, help me!" Woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me and I experienced an incredible thing. The current started in my shoulder, raced down into my arm and sprang into our clutched hands. Then this warm reconciliation seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes. "I forgive you, brother." I cried with my whole heart. For a long moment we grasped each others hands, the former guard, the former prisoner. I have never known the love of God so intensely as I did in that moment!" When we forgive we set a prisoner free—ourselves.

Forgiveness is an attitude that we must continually nurture in order for it to be effective. Every time we hold a grudge or hard feelings toward God or others we are undermining the forgiving attitude that Christ demonstrated and made possible.

Let's not only be strong on the GOLDEN Rule but also on the GRACE Rule for Christ our Savior's sake and others.

The following steps will help in the process of forgiving others

1. Acknowledge and own the pain. You must acknowledge you have been hurt by someone and it is creating pain in you. Don't merely say to the offender "Oh that's ok I will forgive you."

2. Releasing your rights, which means don't hold a grudge or hatred toward the offender.

3. Desiring reconciliation. That doesn't mean you excuse the offender, but you want to work toward reconciliation which takes time.

4. Rebuilding the relationship which can be quite difficult. Again it takes time and understanding,

Choose one act of kindness that you can extend to the offender in sincerity.

After forgiveness remember:

1. Never to bring it up again
2. Don't talk to others about it
3. Don't dwell on it yourself