

# Forgiveness is not some easy option for those with no stomach for confrontation. It is a necessity.

wrought by the wrongdoer is etched on the victim's face. He wears the scars—but not alone. The perpetrator has not been left unscathed by what he has done. He has worn the crime in loathing heaped upon him by his own conscience and the contempt of the community. He is tortured also by his inability to undo what has happened. He stands helpless before the ruin that he has wrought. There is no redemption for him or for his victim, save in forgiveness.

In Czarist Russia, Timothy Osipovic was orphaned. He was raised by an uncle who was appointed his legal guardian. When he was seventeen, he discovered that his parents had left him a fortune but his uncle had squandered much of it. So mad was he that he fought with the uncle; wounding him in the hand. As a result he was tried in the courts and banished to Siberia.

Fortunately for Timothy, his uncle had not spent all his inheritance, and he was able to live a simple and comfortable life in Siberia. He married and, in the course of time, began to read the Bible. He was drawn to Jesus Christ. But he still had many dark days in which he brooded over the wrong his uncle had done.

One day he sat in his yard reading the gospel. He prayed aloud: "If only Christ would come to see me." And then it seemed as if a voice spoke in reply, "I will come." Timothy was filled with joy. From that day forward he instructed his wife to set another place at the meal table. People would come to visit and they would ask, "Are you expecting someone?"

"A most honored guest," he would reply.

Christmas was coming and it occurred to Timothy that if Christ should come at Christmas, he should make fit company for him. So he went into the village and invited every waif and every outcast he could find, to come to his home for dinner at Christmas.


On Christmas eve the table was set. Gathered around it were an assortment of derelict and hopeless types. At the head of the board was a place with knife and fork and plate generously furnished with food—but still no honored guest.

Just as Timothy was about to ask the blessing, the door was flung open and there stood a man, starved, disheveled, and

very worn. Timothy stared hard at the weathered face. It seemed familiar to him. Yes! It was his uncle.

Shivering with cold and stammering for words, the uncle spoke. "Timothy, I have been searching for you many years. My life has been ruined by what I did to you. I have been looking for you to ask forgiveness. I had lost my way tonight and only stumbled to your door."

Then Timothy found words. "Thank you, God. You answered my prayer. You sent him. Let us rejoice. Christ is among us!"

Many have lost the privilege of fellowship through a wrong done. Years are spent in a wilderness of lost intimacies; where men and women remember and grieve, grieve and remember. Forgiveness is required. It needs to be granted and received. Where it is received, Christ is present. Where it is bestowed, Christ has come. At the table where Christ is guest, there is brotherhood, peace and joy. 

18<sup>th</sup> GNU Bible School

God's love   
is for   
everyone!

HOW THE GOSPEL OF LUKE REVEALS THAT IN CHRIST  
**you**  
ARE INCLUDED IN GOD'S GLAD SALVATION.

4-6 MAY 2001  
ALDERSON HALL  
11710 Education St.,  
Auburn, CA 95602



FEATURING  
Pastor Ron Allen  
Pastor Roy Gee  
Inspiring music

530.823.9690  
gnu@goodnewsunlimited.org  
www.goodnewsunlimited.org