

## Would You Forgive This Man?

From Ronald L. Dart's Program Notes

This was the title of an article by Marvin Olasky in the May 17 issue of *World Magazine*. A common question in so many of life's circumstances is, "Do I have to forgive a person if he has not repented?"

Jesus made a statement that bears on this question. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:24-25). What is striking is the difference between this and something he said on another occasion. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught 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 (Matthew 5:23-24).

In Mark's account of a different message of Jesus, there is no reconciliation, no leaving your gift and going away. "When ye stand praying, if ye have aught against any, forgive." Right there where you stand. And it seems inexorably linked to your relationship with God, to your prayers being

answered. It really sounds like unconditional forgiveness, something we find hard to do.

But it is worth taking a moment to consider the man that Marvin Olasky was writing about. He was a Cambodian. For years, he had been known as a gentle Christian teacher who walked around with a Bible and helped hungry refugee children. Then, in 1999, a photographer identified him as the master torturer for the Khmer Rouge.

Kaing Guek Eav, now a frail 66, admits responsibility for 12,000-14,000 deaths. Three decades ago, known as Comrade Duch (pronounced Duke), he ran a Phnom Penh torture center that was the next-to-last stop for "class enemies" who were then murdered in Cambodian communism's killing fields and buried in mass graves.

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Eav will go to trial. The Cambodian government is finally charging some Khmer Rouge leaders with crimes against humanity and, in the process, rubbing their noses in the enormity of their evil. Judges, lawyers, and witnesses earlier this year escorted Eav to the scenes of his mass murders. They showed him a tree against which his underlings smashed babies' heads. They showed him a memorial that

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### End of Year Planning . . .

A donation in honor of a friend or loved one is an especially thoughtful gesture of love and respect. When you make that donation to Christian Educational Ministries at the end of the year, it can also help to reduce the amount of tax you will be required to pay for the current year's income. Consider making a tribute gift to CEM today. We'll send a letter of acknowledgment to your honoree to inform them of your thoughtful gift. Your donations are always thoughtfully and prayerfully applied to maintain CEM's radio program, publications, and ministries.

## New Festival Association Chairman

Christian Educational Ministries is pleased to announce that Mr. Wayne Hinton has agreed to be the new Festival Association Chairman. Originally, Mr. Hinton came to Mr. Dart with a proposal to lighten CEM's load and a much better way to organize the Feast of Tabernacles. Ron then appointed Wayne Hinton as the first Festival Association Chairman. There have been several in between, but we at CEM are delighted to have Mr. Hinton back filling this most important role.

Over the years, Mr. Hinton has had many experiences, gotten education, and filled many positions that make him highly qualified to do

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this job. He grew up in a Christian home, attended a Presbyterian college, worked for EDS for many years and retired from that business. While living in Kentucky, he found the Worldwide Church of God and began attending. He went from there to the Church of God, International and now, as an ordained minister, he pastors a Church of God in Fairview, Texas. Doubtless, Mr. Hinton has the experience and qualifications to be our new Festival Coordinator. He is already off and running to find a desirable location and staff the 2014 Feast of Tabernacles. Be prepared to answer the call when he contacts you to fill a position for the next Feast.

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## You Are Making a Difference!

Recently, a listener wrote to express appreciation to Ron. We thought everyone would be encouraged by what he had to say. The following is the text of his letter:

"My dear brother Ron, On the day that I found Born to Win on my radio, my life was a wreck. Spiritually, mentally, and emotionally I was lacking. I had always believed in God because my Grandma did, but you would never have known it by the way that I was living my life.

"I heard you on the way home from crappie [a kind of fish] fishing on Sunday morning and was immediately drawn to your 'teaching' instead of 'preaching.'

"During one of the programs there was an offer for a CD

message 'A Closet Never Cleaned Out.' I ordered and listened and thought of how much 'garbage' and how little 'treasure' there was in my closet. About that time I discovered your website, and my job required me to have a wireless internet connection in my truck, so I bought an FM modulator for my computer, tuned out the world and you became my near constant companion when driving.

"I believe I have listened to everything on your website and some things like the 'Making Life Work' series countless times. I don't have to tell you how God's Word is quick, powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, and you can't imagine how my life has changed.

"I have been blessed

professionally, financially, physically, mentally, emotionally. . . I was a raging alcoholic and I have not touched a drop in five years. My marriage that was headed for the dump was saved, as well as my wife. My children have seen me turn to God and the effect it has had and God willing they will continue in the way. I know that it is God's Word that made the difference, but I thank God for you and I wanted you to know the difference that you made in my life. May God bless you in all that you do.

"PS. It is great to hear your voice in the intros to the 'Epistles of Paul' Weekend Bible Study. I hear a difference in the first and the current, so keep up the hard work!!!" T.R.

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displays the skulls of thousands of his victims. Eav broke down in sobs. But he did more than that. He knelt on the ground and prayed, because during the 1990s the torturer had made a profession of faith in Christ.

When he was discovered, Eav confessed, saying, “It is God’s will that you are here.” Cristopher LaPel, the pastor who had baptized him, said he “was shocked when I found out who he really was, because what he did was so evil.”

LaPel had great reason for fierce anger: Eav and his revolutionary colleagues had killed LaPel’s parents, brother, and sister during the 1975-79 Red Terror. But upon reflection, LaPel’s reaction changed: “It’s amazing. It’s a miracle. Christianity changes people’s lives. If Jesus can change Eav, he can change anyone.”

The Cambodian courts will deal with the issue of punishment. Eav has told reporters, “I have done very bad things in my life. Now it is time to bear the consequences of my actions. I thought that God was very bad. I did not serve God, I served communism. I feel very sorry about the killings. We killed them like chickens. . . I guess I will go to jail now, but it is OK. The killings must be understood. The truth should be known.”

Would you forgive this man?

The truth should be known, he said. We already know a lot of it. Some 1.7 million Cambodians, one-fourth of the population, died during the four years of Khmer Rouge rule. Society doesn’t really want to know the truth. It is just too hard to reconcile the inside of a man who in

one year can kill people in their thousands like so many chickens, and in another year be a humanitarian, feeding refugee children.

The picture shows a frail little 66 year old man, a pitiable creature. How could this man have been a monster? It is a question that deserves much thought in its own right. But for now, if you were a Cambodian whose family had been murdered by the man who came to be known as Comrade Duch, would you forgive this man?

Oddly, Eav gave us the answer when he said, “Now it is time to bear the *consequences* of my actions.” Forgiveness is one thing. Avoiding the consequences of your actions is another thing altogether.

A man can repent, know that God has forgiven him, hope that the people he has hurt have forgiven him, and still know that the consequences are going to be with him. It is striking that he was almost relieved to be discovered. It was, he said, God’s will. And indeed it was.

Marvin Olasky went on from there: “The punishment Duch is likely to receive should be distinguished from the forgiveness from Cambodian Christians that he may receive—**and** this Cambodia saga has parallels to the story told in a famous work, Simon Wiesenthal’s *The Sunflower* (1970).”

Wiesenthal, after World War II, became a leading hunter of Nazi war criminals, but the story he tells in *The Sunflower* is of an encounter he had with a dying Nazi, Karl Seidl, in 1943 at an Austrian concentration camp. Seidl, an SS member, had asked a nurse to bring

him a Jew to whom he could confess his sins against other Jews. The dying man, from his bed, grabbed Wiesenthal’s hand and confessed to helping to burn down a house in which more than 150 Jews were trapped.

Wiesenthal makes clear Seidl’s deep sincerity, quoting him as saying, “I cannot die . . . without coming clean. This must be my confession. I know that what I have told you is terrible. In the long nights while I have been waiting for death, time and time again I have longed to talk about it to a Jew and beg forgiveness from him. . . I know that what I am asking is almost too much for you, but without your answer I cannot die in peace.”

Seidl begged for forgiveness, but he apparently did not die in peace: Wiesenthal said nothing and walked out. Over the subsequent two years Wiesenthal told fellow camp mates of this incident, each time asking them, “Was my silence at the bedside of the dying Nazi right or wrong?” He stipulated that Seidl sounded truly repentant, truly haunted by his sins. He noted that Seidl died the next day and left Wiesenthal all his possessions—but he refused to take them.

How would you have answered him? I have little doubt that your answer may differ based on whether you are a Jew or a Christian. Wiesenthal argued that only the victims can truly forgive their perpetrators: The dead cannot offer forgiveness and co-religionists cannot take their place. “Forgetting is something that time alone takes care of, but forgiveness is an act of volition, and only the sufferer is qualified to make the decision,” he

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wrote. Wiesenthal did not forget and did not forgive. One of fewer than 34 survivors out of 149,000 prisoners originally in that camp—89 members of his extended family perished in the Holocaust—he ferreted out information that led to the arrest of over 1,000 Nazi war criminals. He died in 2005 at the age of 96.

But let's return to those two statements by Jesus. What is different about them? "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:24-25).

But what about the Matthew example? "Therefore 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" (Matthew 5:23-24). This Scripture clearly shows Christians have to be the agent of reconciliation.

Order this CD today titled, *Would You Forgive This Man?* You will learn some of life's most valuable lessons about forgiveness. There is a valuable lesson for you from Pope John Paul II. You may not agree with his teachings or his church, but remember, the Bible says: "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20). So it behooves God's people to make sure their righteousness exceeds those we may consider to be scribes, Pharisees, or perhaps even unchurched. Then, will you forgive those who have sinned against you?

## *In Memory*

CEM gratefully acknowledges the generous offering made in memory of John D. (Tony) Hammer, 83, who passed away on October 25, 2013 in Frisco, Texas. Tony was born on June 13, 1930 in Seminole, Oklahoma, to Roy and Pearl Hammer. At his death, Mr. Hammer was a resident of Frisco, Texas, where he was a member of Stonebrier Community Church. A veteran of the US Air Force, he had received a bachelor's degree from Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, and went on to work in the ministry for many years. After retiring from ministry, he worked in marketing for Nationwide Insurance Company. He is survived by his loving wife, Natalie Hammer; his children, Vickie Hammer, Jan Oakes, Mike Hammer, and Dave Hammer; his granddaughter, Catherine Hammer; and two sisters, Shirley Armstrong and Molly Antion.

CEM also gratefully acknowledges gifts in memory of Herbert (Mac) McComb of Whitehouse, Texas, who passed away on October 22 at age 93. Mac was a long-time Church of God member, and a veteran of both the Navy and the Army. He is survived by his wife, Harriet; his son and daughter-in-law, Robert and Lisa McComb; their two daughters; and nieces and nephews.

### **Christian Educational Ministries Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended October 31, 2013**

<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	
Contributions	\$ 867,448
CEM Bookstore	71,052
Other Income	<u>5,880</u>
	\$ 944,380

<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
A/V Supplies	\$ 15,877
Occupancy	10,463
Office & Adm. Expenses	21,110
Professional Fees	12,947
Mailing Expenses	7,477
Postage	87,034
Printing	59,790
Media-Radio & Prod	481,238
Telephone & Utilities	20,664
Editorial Services	26,285
CEM Bookstore	3,231
Employee Benefits	30,811
Wages & Payroll Taxes	<u>178,519</u>
Total Operating Exp.	\$ 955,446

Increase in Fund Bal. \$ 11,066

#### **Feast of Tabernacles**

#### **Statement of Operations 2013**

Total Offering	\$ 26,998
Total Expense	<u>33,827</u>

Decrease in Fund Bal. (\$ 6,829)  
(Reflects receipts through Oct. 31, 2013  
only; excludes in-kind donations)

## *Christian Educational Ministries*

PO Box 560  
Whitehouse, Texas 75791  
**phone:** 1-888-BIBLE-44  
**fax:** 903-839-9311  
**e-mail:** adm@borntowin.net  
**website:** www.borntowin.net

*That the man of God may be proficient  
and equipped for every good work.*