

CHAPTER 7  
**THE BLESSING PACT -RELATIONSHIPS**  
THE BLESSING PACT

I once woke up in the middle of the night feeling up-tight and restless. The previous day a fellow-Christian had hurt me very, very deeply and I was full of bitterness in my heart towards him and what he had done. "How" I asked myself, "could a Christian do that?" I started tossing and turning and woke Marge and was so restless I could not get back to sleep. I became more and more annoyed. I tossed and turned some more then I remembered that verse in the Bible which says to "bless those that curse you, and pray for those that abuse you ." (Lk. 6v28) I had known for a good while that one should forgive, but I couldn't see how I could forgive this person, And yet, I couldn't sleep so I tossed and turned some more; then I said; "Lord, bless them! Lord bless them real good in the best way that you know. Lord, bless them unreservedly." Immediately I fell asleep and slept like a baby until morning when I awoke refreshed and renewed.

Over the next four years whenever I felt up-tight about that brother, or the group that he was with . I just asked God to bless him some more; because, I concluded, if he still upset me, I had not asked God to bless him enough!! Then the Lord challenged me to give him a Christmas present and apologize for feeling up-tight against him. This I did and six months later we were sharing fellowship in Jesus again. What can be more exciting than seeking in the Lord to overcome evil with good? (Rom.12v21) Peter said to Jesus; "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him; as many as seven times?" Jesus said to him; "I do not say to you, seven times, but seventy times seven" "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6v14,15) Let us consider some Scriptures. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5v7) "I forgave you all that debt because you asked Me, and should you not have mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you?" "The jailers are therefore to keep you until you pay all your debt." (Paraphrased) "So also my Heavenly Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." (Matt 18v25-35) "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you so that you may be children of your Father which is in Heaven." (Matt. 5v44, 45 KJV) "Do not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them. Live in harmony with one another; repay no one evil for evil. If possible, so far as it depends on you,

live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves." (Rom.12v14-19) "I say to you, do not resist one who is evil, but if one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. If anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. (Matt. 5v41) Leave it to God, for it is written; Vengeance is mine, I will repay says the Lord. No, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." (Rom. 12v19-20) "Why do you pass judgment on your brother, it is before his own master that he stands or falls. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God." "So each of us shall give account of ourselves to God." (Rom, 14v10) "Therefore, let him who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10v13) "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. ". (Gal. 6v1) "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother, but if he does not listen, take one or two along with you that every word can be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to even the church, let him be to you as an un-believer." (Matt. 18v15-17) "He who goes about gossiping, reveals secrets. Therefore do not associate with one who speaks foolishly." (Prov.20v19) "I tell you on the day of judgment, men will render account of every careless word that they utter. For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned." (Matt. 12v36. 37). As it says in the Proverbs: "When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to ignore it." (Prov.19v11 TEV) **Are you practicing blessing those that curse you? Are they still causing you problems? Then you have not asked God to bless them enough!!**

So I have found it a wonderful thing that whenever something happens to me and I'm filled with bitterness, that I can in fact ask God to bless that person and so go free in liberty, joy and peace. If you apply the same "blessing" principal, you can be free too.

Before I got married, I asked my father if he had any advice for me regarding marriage and he said this: "Never sleep back to back with your wife because you are not talking to her. Always get squabbles fixed up before you go to sleep and forgive each other." It says in the Scripture "Be angry, but sin not. Never let the sun go down on your anger." (Eph.4v26) I have found that to be very good advice. True, there have been times when I have let the communication lines become blocked and the Lord has to take us away to a quiet place. Away from the turmoil and high .pressure of work, we

get those lines of communication cleared again. It took a week on one occasion. The longer I go on in married life, and know the joy of communication, the more I long that those communication lines are not blocked and that there is no un-forgiveness to hinder the love of Christ; that love which was able to reach out and say; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Jesus was speaking of those who were ill-treating Him as He was dying on the cross.) How can we fail to forgive others? Yes, God is so willing to forgive us for the sake of His son and to put His love into us so that we may love others with His love.

One day I pushed Marge to have a car available for me and when it was all arranged, I decided I did not want it so I asked her to forgive me. She said she would forgive me when she got ready to and so we parted with a broken relationship (temporarily) .However, she found that she lost her peace with God and decided to forgive me before she had driven very far down the road. Marge says of this experience: " It was like a cancerous giant creeping all over me and I began to feel sick and head-achy. It was as if God put a magnifying glass on the results of that unforgiving spirit so I could see how very damaging such attitudes can be, not only to the relationship with one's partner, but also to one's physical health. I was more than ready to forgive by the time this experience had been with me for a few minutes."

One translation of Luke 10v5 could read: "Whatever house you enter, first say "blessing to this house" and if the son of blessing is there, your blessing will rest upon him and if not, it will return to you." As you can see, there is no harm in asking God's blessing on people; asking for God's blessing, in the best way **He** knows, is a sure way of forgiving, a good way of plucking the weeds of bitterness out of our own lives and so providing no ground for bitterness which is the cancer of the soul. Saying 'I forgive you' puts me into the realm of being judgmental and saying 'I was right, you were wrong' but asking God to bless someone is much more like saying, 'I don't hold anything against you regardless of who was right' this leaves the judgment safely in God's hands. (Rom. 12v19)

Sometimes we need the touch of God to lift us above the circumstances into the Lord's provision and blessing. For example, Marge and I did not know each other very well before we got married, so during the first few months whenever she upset me, I took the big axe and went outside and chopped logs. Then we asked for prayer at a meeting one night and Harry Greenwood prayed for us and had a word of prophecy that the

Lord had made us one and that we were to wait till each saw what the other saw and then to step together. Praise God, I have not had any need to chop logs out of annoyance with Marge since! And that is now 44 years ago praise the Lord!