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# Path Out

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I'll show the path; You take the steps.



Chapter 1

## Bought the Hat and T-Shirt

*Defeat Conflict All Five Ways*

You needn't have been alive very long to suffer the emotional effects of conflict, trouble or misunderstanding. These effects have probably already lasted way too long.

When you have pain from mishap or wrong done, and you have wrestled with the hurt from a life that has gone sideways or soured, you have got to do something. Somehow you have to process your shock, hurt, remorse and grief.

## It is Personal

Pain and hurt were brought home to me in a poignant and remarkable way. I had taken my family through the shame, regret and humiliation of bankruptcy. I had failed in business. As a Christian, I was against this failure and everything that had transpired to cause my life to fall apart. Caught in the middle and found guilty, I was reaping the full harvest of a life gone wrong, mine. I was in complete consternation.

I had to move away from family and home to find work, just to make our ends meet, and, possibly find a way out for us. This separation only added to the guilt of my circumstance. I was alone with my thoughts, and I didn't like them.

I had rehearsed the events that led up to bankruptcy ad-infinitum. I took that rehearsal to the Lord in prayer many times. I felt lousy, condemned and abundantly guilty.

I had owned my mess in its entirety, but the weight of it continued to oppress me. I knew it was my fault, and I knew I had to live with it.

After seven months apart I was able to relocate my family to our new home and try to start new.

One more time I cried out to God and was asking him to forgive me. Then something strange and remarkable happened. I heard his response to

my thoughts, in my thoughts, and it shocked and halted me. He said, “I can’t.”

*What do you mean you can’t?*

I immediately thought I had heard wrong, and so I challenged the thought. “You are God, who always forgives. Something is obviously wrong with my hearing and, or, my understanding.” I reprocessed the part of the Lord’s Prayer, “Forgive as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.” I had forgiven and repurposed to forgive again. I came again, “You are God, who always forgives.” He responded, again in my thoughts, “I can’t forgive something you are not guilty of.” I was perplexed, hopeful and still halted.

I began to understand, and from that moment, began to find a lasting peace.

I had taken care of and owned “my stuff” for which I was guilty. I had thoroughly dealt with it in openness and confession but “it” was only part of the problem. I was stuck because I had seen “it” as the whole problem. There were four more ‘causes’ that worked into the complexity of the problem. It was only when I completely dealt with all five of these sources that I was able to walk out in freedom. I was forgiven, clean and on the path to restoration.

## Five Sources of Conflict

The sources of conflict were: Myself; Others; The World Around Us; The Devil; and God. These are the five areas that I needed to understand and now need to communicate with you so that you can make sense of your

life and completely deal with your hurts and remorse of your past. They are the precise points where you can experience victory; a victory uniquely yours. *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I [Jesus] have come that they [you] may have life, and have it to the full.”* (John 10:10, NIV) [Inserts, my own.]