

APPENDIX 1

Seven Steps of Forgiveness

1. Choose to forgive.

Forgiveness begins with a simple decision to obey God and forgive those who have hurt me. Jesus made it clear in Matthew 18:35 that this decision to forgive is to be from the heart. We are to forgive wholeheartedly, not holding back or keeping any resentment. Forgiveness starts not with feelings, but with a decision. Verbalize this decision by faith and confess aloud, "In Jesus' name, I choose to forgive _____."

2. Confess your sin to God.

Ephesians 4:32 reminds us we are to forgive one another, even as God through Christ forgave us. Even more, God desires for all people to know forgiveness. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die to make that possible. Withholding forgiveness can stop people from experiencing God's forgiveness. Yet God is always ready to forgive those who call on Him. (See Psalm 86:5.) Accept unforgiveness as sin and confess it to God. Then receive God's forgiveness, accepting it just as you would accept a gift from someone.

3. Ask forgiveness from those you wronged.

We are responsible to restore relationship with anyone who has anything against us. (See Matthew 5:23, 24.) Accept responsibility for the wrong you have done and ask for forgiveness. If you are unaware of what you did wrong, ask God to show you. If you do not have a genuine sorrow or repentance, stop first and prayerfully ask God to show you how you hurt that person and how they may have felt. Allow

God to give you a whole new understanding and sensitivity toward that person.

4. Ask God to bless the person who hurt you.

“Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you” (Luke 6:28 NKJV). Ask God to truly bless the person who hurt you. As you do this, follow the example of Jesus in asking God to bless him!

5. Do something nice for the person who hurt you.

“Do good to those who hate you” (Luke 6:27 NKJV). “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21 NKJV). This could be accomplished by complimenting that person or serving them in some way. Ask God; He will show you something that will be meaningful to that person.

6. Accept the person the way they are, even if they are wrong.

Do not defend what they do, but defend them. You do not necessarily need to approve of what they are doing, but treat them with dignity, respect, love and kindness anyway. “Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7 NKJV).

7. Look at this person through the eyes of faith.

Do not concentrate on areas of weakness, sin or irritation. Rather, concentrate on seeing this person as God designed them. Follow Abraham’s example, and by faith see things that are not as they appear. (See Romans 4:16-21.) Begin to think and speak positively about this person. (See 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.) Love “believes all things and hopes all things.”

APPENDIX 2

Who I Am in Christ

Throughout this book, you have read scriptures about who you are in Christ. I trust they have brought you to a place of wholeness. Here they are again, along with others, to allow for continued meditation, study and personal heart change.

I am highly esteemed	Daniel 9:23
I am now God's child	1 John 3:2
I am born of the imperishable seed of God's Word ..	1 Peter 1:23
I am loved by Christ and freed from my sins	Revelation 1:5
I am forgiven all my sins	Ephesians 1:7
I am justified from all things	Acts 13:39
I am the righteousness of God	2 Corinthians 5:21
I am free from all condemnation	Romans 8:1
I am free from my past	Philippians 3:13
I am a new creature	2 Corinthians 5:17
I am the temple of the Holy Spirit	1 Corinthians 6:19
I am redeemed from the curse of the law	Galatians 3:13
I am reconciled to God	2 Corinthians 5:18
I am loved; God's Son sacrificed Himself for me	1 John 4:10
I am a saint and loved by God	Romans 1:7
I am the head and not the tail	Deuteronomy 28:13
I am called of God by the grace given in Christ	2 Timothy 1:9
I have been given fullness in Christ	Colossians 2:10
I am rescued from the power of darkness	Colossians 1:13
I am accepted by Christ	Romans 15:7
I am the salt of the earth	Matthew 5:13
I am the light of the world	Matthew 5:14
I am dead to sin	Romans 6:2

Identity: The Distinctiveness of You

- I am alive to God Romans 6:11
- I am seated with Christ in heavenly realms Ephesians 2:6
- I am a king and a priest to God Revelation 1:6
- I am loved with an everlasting love Jeremiah 31:3
- I am an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ Romans 8:17
- I am qualified to share in the inheritance
of the kingdom of light Colossians 1:12
- I am more than a conqueror Romans 8:37
- I am healed by the wounds of Jesus 1 Peter 2:24
- I was known by God before
I was formed in the womb Jeremiah 1:5; Ephesians 1:4
- I am in Christ Jesus by God's act 1 Corinthians 1:30
- I am kept by God's power 1 Peter 1:5
- I am sealed with the promised Holy Spirit Ephesians 1:13
- I am not condemned; I have everlasting life John 5:24
- I am being conformed to the image of God's Son... Romans 8:29
- I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live Galatians 2:20
- I have been given all things that pertain to life 2 Peter 1:3
- I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing .. Ephesians 1:3
- I am a partaker of the divine nature 2 Peter 1:4
- I have peace with God Romans 5:1
- I am a chosen royal priest 1 Peter 2:9
- I can do all things through Christ Philippians 4:13
- I have all my needs met by God according
to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus Philippians 4:19
- I am kept strong and blameless to the end 1 Corinthians 1:8
- I am chosen by Him 1 Thessalonians 1:4
- I am born of God and I overcome the world 1 John 5:4
- I have a guaranteed inheritance Ephesians 1:14
- I am a fellow citizen in God's household Ephesians 2:19
- Christ's truth has set me free John 8:32
- I am in Jesus Christ's hands John 10:28

Who I Am in Christ

I am holy, without blemish
and free from accusation Colossians 1:22
I have eyes to see God's eternal purpose 2 Corinthians 4:18
Christ is being formed in me Galatians 4:19
I am anointed by the Holy One 1 John 2:20
God's love is lavished upon me 1 John 3:1
I am kept from falling and presented without fault Jude 24
I am God's house Hebrews 3:6
God has given me a spirit of power, of love
and of self-discipline 2 Timothy 1:7
I am convinced that He is able to guard
what I have entrusted to Him 2 Timothy 1:12
He has considered me faithful and
appointed me to His service 1 Timothy 1:12
I am justified by faith Romans 3:28
The Spirit Himself intercedes for me Romans 8:26
Inwardly I am being renewed day by day 2 Corinthians 4:16
For freedom Christ has set me free Galatians 5:1
I am held together by Him Colossians 1:17
I have the mind of Christ 1 Corinthians 2:16
I am called to build Christ in others Colossians 1:28
I am a son and an heir of God..... Galatians 4:7
I am protected by the power of Jesus' name..... John 17:11

APPENDIX 3

How Should the Church Respond to Sexual Identity?

Mother Teresa is quoted as saying, “Love one person at a time.” The key, the attractant to a group of people called the church, is love.

Before I became a follower of Jesus, I was invited to a rather Pentecostal church. I had never stepped foot inside such a place. The level of praise, excitement and shouting took me way out of my comfort zone toward nervousness and a desire to run. I had no idea what would happen next. It was all new to me.

As I look back at that experience, I no longer remember the oddness of the moment or the persons who grabbed me and shook my hand vigorously or the people dressed in jeans and others in three-piece suits. But what I do remember, what profoundly sticks in my memory is the love I felt. Hug after hug, all given in love. Everything took a back seat to what I was feeling deeply and had not felt in a church setting ever before.

No one judged me for not singing. No one judged me for not raising my hands and no one judged me for not saying, “Praise the Lord!” They just loved. It attracted me to the One they loved.

That is the power of love. Love draws out the beauty of another. Love accepts without judgment or condemnation. Jesus loved and paid close attention to anyone who sincerely sought Him. He loved His neighbor as Himself.

This is where the church starts and ends—love. We love because He first loved. It is also where we mess up because

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sometimes we get judgement in front of love, and no one is attracted to judgment. It's not a condemning voice that draws anyone to repentance. Jeremiah wrote, "With loving kindness I have drawn you" (Jeremiah 31:3). Romans tells us that, "God's kindness leads you toward repentance" (Romans 2:4).

When you or I claim to follow Christ, then love must be our means to a confused soul. If they do not know our love, they will not receive our message.

A welcoming community

The local church must welcome the broken. If any community in any culture could offer a safe place, it should be the church. It is our job to care for, receive, counsel and love the broken. These persons need a family, a spiritual family who accepts them for who they are and where they are, with great faith for where they can someday be.

We all need a place to belong. We all need genuine friends—a place to connect. In loving those who are broken down by life's burdens, we do not have to be professional counselors. We do need to share with them the love of the Counselor.

For years I worked with a man who was diagnosed as "paranoid schizophrenic and depressed." Very few persons knew how to relate to him and even fewer wanted to. But the Spirit of God gave me a deep compassion for this "unlovely" man. He knew who accepted him and he knew who ridiculed or belittled him. He knew who to talk to and he knew who was "safe." Everyone, even this very disturbed man, is worthy of the love of God and, therefore, worthy of our love.

The book of I John says something that relates: "Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For

whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister” (1 John 4:20, 21).

One evening our local news revealed that a man in my wife’s home church shot and killed his wife, his daughter and then himself. I laid in bed that night telling my wife that a man who commits double homicide and then suicide has just entered hell. He was an elder in his church and a well-known believer in Christ. I will never forget the words I heard in my spirit just as I made that statement. “How do you know where he is? How do you know his state of mind? And how do you know his heart?” I was stunned. The obvious answer was that I did not know.

Regardless of the struggle in people’s lives, we do not know their hearts. I have counseled plenty of persons who lived with life-controlling sins and at the same time claimed Jesus to be their personal Savior. God knows their heart.

The senior pastor of a Foursquare church in Los Angeles, CA, Nancy Eskijian, said concerning those who attend her church, “So how do we approach gay people inside or outside the church – or transsexual or transgendered people, for that matter? We demonstrate God’s love in practical ways and with genuine interest, just as Christ did. We approach them with compassion, healing, and truth in the doses they can receive, just as Christ did. We move toward them as we are led by the Holy Spirit, just as Christ did.”¹

No compromise with God’s Word

At the same time, we do not compromise the Word of God. If someone is living life in error and not obeying the Word, we fully love them but do not place them in leadership in the local church. We dare not compromise the Scriptures

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for the sake of acceptance. We are not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation for all. (Romans 1:16)

I will be forever thankful for leaders in my life who confronted my sin scripturally and in a healthy way. I will forever be thankful that my heavenly Father is a Father who disciplines and will not compromise His Word. In the book of James, we have a promise that connects to exactly what we are talking about. James reminds us to confess our sin to one another and to pray for one another. James promises that prayer, the prayer of a righteous person, is powerful. He then writes, "My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

What an amazing promise. When we walk in humility and take a mature position, longing for the one in error to leave their error, we can, "save them from death and cover over a multitude of sin." That is the church in prayerful, loving action.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.... Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.... Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.... Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited (Romans 12:9, 10, 13, 16).

ENDNOTE

1. Nancy Eskijian, "The Truth about Our Gay Dilemma," *Charisma*, February 2013, <https://www.charismamag.com/life/culture/16574-the-truth-about-our-gay-dilemma>.

APPENDIX 4

Ten Areas to Build Healthy Identity in Children

1. **Employ corrections, not punishment.**

One of the most difficult things to do as a parent is to reinforce a boundary and provide appropriate discipline. All too often, children have this uncanny ability to bring the worst out of us as parents. Sometimes we might overcorrect them or dish out punishment because we are angry. This should be avoided.

Punishment has to do with me preserving my right to be angry and maintaining my posture as the one in charge. It says that my child must pay for what he or she did wrong. Punishment is often done out of anger and lacks any training toward change. Put simply, it is the more powerful parent enforcing his or her will upon the weaker child. Punishment is about inflicting shame and pain for wrongdoing.

Correction, on the other hand, is not just about reward and punishment; it is more about challenging actions and shaping the will in a life-giving manner. In this way, the spirit of the child is guided and formed. It considers what is best for the child.

Correction takes time to administer because it includes instruction toward a different and healthier future. Punishment on the other hand is normally abrupt, reactionary and often given with little thought. Proverbs 29:15 says that the rod of *correction* imparts life. Job 5:17 reminds us that God also provides correction: "Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty."

Correction provides training with love. It takes into consideration the gifts deposited within each child. Punishment provides pain, but no lasting effort toward change.

2. Train your children in the way they should go.

The book of Proverbs tells us to train our children in the way *they* should go. This can be interpreted as each child's bent, calling and gifts. Draw those gifts out. Find ways to encourage them and make use of them in order for your child to grow in his or her own identity. (See Proverbs 22:6.)

When our son was three years old, he would remove the pots and pans from the kitchen cabinet, place them on the floor upside down, sit on one, grab two wooden spoons and then play the "drums." It didn't take much to realize that we could identify his gifts and to do everything within our power to help him follow his interests.

Our son eventually progressed in his craft to the extent that he was drumming on two albums produced in Nashville. It truly was a calling for him.

3. Empower your children, rather than being powerful over them.

Far too many parents train their children to view Mom and Dad as having all power and control over them. Even when we do not try to give this impression, it somehow comes across fairly often. For example, have you ever heard a parent say, "Because I said so"? And then there is this one: "You will do this (fill in the blank) or you will not be able to do this (fill in the blank)."

These statements may work in the first several years of life, but as children mature, the commandeering approach needs to be adjusted. If it is not, we will train our child into thinking that they just need to resign themselves to our

power. The use of power is often void of relationship. A void of relationship creates a void of security.

One day, in the life of every child, that power will be resisted, tested or simply ignored. Powerless children become victims because powerless people view themselves as victims. Powerless people do not have to take responsibility for their actions; they can blame others. Eventually, powerless people may want everything provided for them. But there is an alternative. Empower your children to think and reason and make choices of their own. While providing proper boundaries, teach them to make decisions rather than you as the parent deciding everything for them.

For example, if your child is playing with their food rather than eating during a meal, try this: ask your child (as is age appropriate), "Would you like to finish your meal and then play a little longer with your friend outside or not finish your meal and stay inside to play by yourself?"

To a teenager you might say, "If you wash the car, you can use it tonight to see your friends, but if you choose not to wash the car, you'll have to find a ride on your own. It's your choice." Choices empower our children.

What's the difference? By giving a choice, you are empowering your child to reason, think through the process and choose their own conclusion and consequences (again, as is age appropriate). Powerful children will do powerful things one day as they take responsibility for their decisions.

As we train our children, some areas are negotiable and some are not. This is similar to the scenario in which some classes in high school are required and some are electives. I might say to my child that dress is a negotiable, but modesty in dress is nonnegotiable. It is primarily in the negotiable areas where we can give our children freedom of choice, helping

to empower as they approach those all-important stages of interdependence and finally independence.

4. Keep communication sacred.

Have a meal together every day and talk as a family. Discuss the good, the bad and the challenges. As parents, share about your workday and start the discussion. If we are not open as parents, neither will our children be open about their daily experiences. Have conversations about anything and everything at all age levels. Give each one your attention as they share and require that no one be laughed at but rather laughed with.

Ask questions instead of making statements. Questions require a response from your children while statements do not. Questions offer opportunity for them to expound on certain subjects and can lead to really important details. Looking for responses, opinions and input from your children emphasizes their value.

5. Teach your children the art of play without electronics.

Our son's pediatrician expressed to us as new parents, "Keep your child off the electronic games as long as you can. Teach him to play creatively, send him outside and go explore with him."

Did you know there is a National Toy Hall of Fame in Rochester, New York? Every year a new member is inducted into this toy hall of fame. In 2005, the cardboard box was inducted. What kid doesn't love to play in a cardboard box? One of my favorites was the toy that was inducted in 2008—a plain old stick. The stick was picked because of its "all-purpose, no-cost, recreational qualities." It is portable and versatile and "fosters learning creativity through play and imagination." It's the perfect price; it's all-natural; it's

organic; there are no rules or complicated instructions for use. It can be a horse, a sword, a hockey stick, a fishing rod or a snowman's arms.

6. Train your children in the world of finances.

Teach your children about money, saving, spending, credit, debt and giving. Children who are trained in the proper use of money will have the financial skills that will be essential in the "real" world. We train them to understand and respect money, not to love money. We train them in financial stewardship from God's perspective.

Use the financial lessons you have learned as a teaching tool to those little ones in your life, either as a parent, a grandparent, or a caretaker. Their future teachers and employers will love you for it. Author and financial teacher Larry Burkett once said that we are not responsible for our children's decisions, but we are responsible for their training. Here are some important areas to train them in.

God owns it all. We are to be the best stewards of everything He shares with us.

Because God is so generous, teach generosity. There is no greater blessing than to teach your children the value of giving.

Teach the difference between self-discipline, delayed gratification and immediate self-gratification along with the direct consequences of each.

Give your children regular and meaningful responsibilities: jobs without pay such as picking up their toys. Do not give an unearned, free-ride allowance, but rather give your children regular jobs like mowing the lawn or folding the clothes that they can be paid for.

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Teach your children to tithe and honor God's kingdom from every dollar earned or given to them. It is all God's, but discipline in regular giving grows a habit.

Teach your children to save a percentage of their income for the future (30-50%), even while designating a percentage that can be spent immediately.

Teach the difference between an asset and a liability (a consumable). Help them to understand the concept of investing and how that will help them beyond today into the future.

Develop a budget with your child as soon as they can comprehend the idea. Start a savings account (starting with a piggy bank) and when age appropriate, obtain a checking account and an ATM card. Teach them how to responsibly use and balance these accounts.

Train them in the proper use of credit and that the borrower is servant to the lender. Teach them the difference in borrowing for an asset versus a liability. Share with them the difference between paying interest and growing interest on their money and investments.

Share with your children your financial mistakes in a way that allows them to learn and benefit from them.

As appropriate, explain other financial concepts such as loans, taxes, utilities, owning a home, maintenance, buying a car, auto repairs, insurance, etc. Take the time to teach your children what God takes the time to teach you about money and His resources.

Financially savvy young persons are miles ahead of financially insecure persons. Learning financial responsibility will sow into one's identity to build further confidence and help keep them from certain financial failures.

7. Do not talk down to your children or speak words of critical judgment.

A recent study of primary school children centered on trying to discover the number one inhibitor to children's creativity and eventually to their performance. I was intrigued to know what these social scientists identified. While there were many ingredients, the area that stood out as the number one killer of creativity was *critical judgment*. Critical judgments are critical words that tear at one's spirit without mercy or grace. They involve criticizing something that is not necessarily changeable (e.g., a lack of athletic ability or academic ability). When words of critical judgment are cast upon another human being, that person begins to suffer a creativity crisis that can lead to an identity crisis.

When a child hears consistent words, tone of voice and nonverbal looks that say, "We never planned you; you were not wanted," they will begin to believe these words. Even when a child hears the words, "What's the matter with you?" or "Don't be so stupid," it indicates in a critical way there is something wrong with them. Their life will be scarred. Their demeanor, the look on their face, and their life expectations will take on this spirit of critical judgment. Proverbs tells us, "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18).

8. Teach your children how to resolve conflict.

Having children to raise, to train and to love is a privilege that can be stretching, maturing, tiring and, quite often, exasperating. I loved being a parent and now love grandparenting. If you are serious about parenting, you realize at times it is more than you think you can handle. At those times, I wondered if I was raising my children or if my children were raising me.

An inability to resolve conflict will keep us stunted for life. Of the dozens and dozens of couples that have sat before me for marital counseling, few of them had any clue of how to actually resolve a conflict. They were experts at having them, but clueless at finding solutions. When you teach your children the skill of resolving conflict in a healthy way, you will impart a talent that will serve them for a lifetime in every relationship, every job and practically every life situation.

You and your spouse cannot have out-of-control arguments without resolve and expect to teach your children how to resolve life issues. You must push toward a healthy solution to the problem with compromise, thereby modeling healthy conflict resolution. When children can learn to resolve conflict, there will be more peace and joy in their life. They will experience less anxiety and far less sadness over broken relationships.

9. Speak words of blessing.

Reading through the Old Testament books of Genesis and Exodus lately has been a great reminder concerning the blessing of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the blessing of fathers to their children. It caused me to think about the fact that “the blessing” might be missing, dormant or decreasing among us as parents today.

When God speaks a blessing, He does not revoke it. Because of Joseph, the Egyptians were blessed. Even Potiphar, Joseph’s boss, realized blessing from the exemplary life of Joseph. The Scripture says, “The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field” (Genesis 39:5).

In the book of Exodus, a blessing was pronounced on food and water. Freedom from sickness was promised for those who blessed the Lord in worship. After all the plagues,

when Pharaoh finally summoned Moses and Aaron in order to relent and allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, he said, "Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. *And also bless me*" (Exodus 12:32).

10. Do not make your children your idol.

Your marriage was before children and will need to be a priority after your children are raised. My encouragement is to place God first, then your marriage and then your children. Our children, while extremely important, cannot be treated as idols. We are not called to worship them or their needs. Parents are not able to meet all the needs of their children, but we know Someone who can and will.

Further, we as parents are not to live our lives vicariously through our children. Parents who endeavor to do this are attempting to find their identity through their children. An example is to dress our young children in the latest, most expensive style of clothing. The children are unaware, but the adults around them notice and make comments of admiration concerning stylish dress.

Another area is sports. For example, you may not have excelled at sports, but your child does. You then live vicariously through your child's sports exploits and accomplishments. Yes, you are proud of your child, but you're more proud of the inferences and accolades you might receive because of your gifted child. You may be unknowingly entering into a competition for the admiration your child deserves.

Do not idolize your child or maintain the goal of becoming your child's best friend. You are not their peer; you are the adult. Choose to be the parent in each and every situation.

While these ten areas are not exhaustive, they encompass a lot of our day-to-day parenting. Do not let them overwhelm

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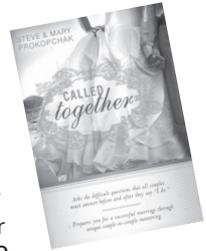
you; instead, read back over the above ten areas and pick one area to concentrate on. Perhaps take the time to write down three goals with that one area and begin to work on positive changes in your parenting. In the future, keep reviewing these ten areas. Choose another to work on, and then write down three new goals.

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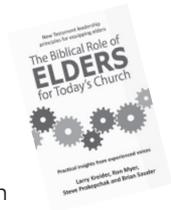
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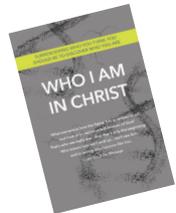
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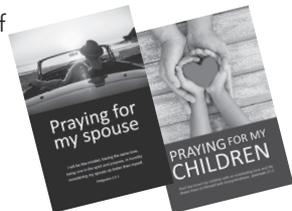
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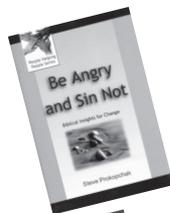
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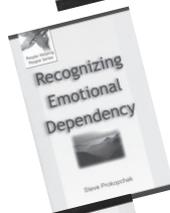
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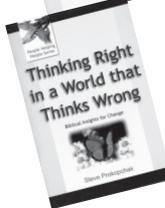
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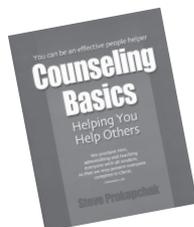
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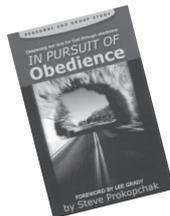
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About Steve Prokopchak

Steve Prokopchak has been a marriage and family counselor for many years. Steve earned his master of human services degree from Lincoln University. As a member of the DOVE International and USA Apostolic Councils, Steve helps to provide oversight and direction for DOVE churches in the United States and the Caribbean. Steve's vision and heart's cry is to see people made whole in their personal lives, marriages and families. He travels regularly, ministering in churches across the nation and internationally, giving people the various leadership and counseling tools they need.



Steve and his wife, Mary, wrote *Called Together*, a unique workbook specifically designed for couple-to-couple pre- and postmarital mentoring use and *Staying Together*, a book helping married couples to build a strong and lasting relationship. Steve also authored a series of booklets called *People Helping People*, topics suitable for small groups. He co-authored the book *The Biblical Role of Elders for Today's Church* and is the author of *Counseling Basics* and *In Pursuit of Obedience*. Steve has had articles published in *Charisma* magazine, *Ministries Today* and *Cell Group Journal*.

Steve and Mary have been married for 46 years and have three married children. The Prokopchaks enjoy three grandchildren and live in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania.

Read Steve's weekly blog calledtogether.wordpress.com.