

"I believe that the bondage of sexual sin, like most other sin, can be broken quite easily if a person is willing to surrender it all to God and create healthy habits that honor God. I'm not fond of the struggle...I relish the victory of the cross!"

--Pastor **Ken Behr**
Founder/Executive Director Faith Dialogue, Palm Beach Gardens

"If you are a man who desires to become a champion for Christ, I highly suggest reading "Changing God's Way!" A word of caution, however, this is not a book for the faint of heart or those who want to merely give lip service to being a Christ-follower. This is a book to help move men from "playing church" and into their calling as warriors for the King of Kings. It as begins with the battle for personal holiness, are up for the challenge of Changing God's Way?"

--Reverend **Michael Armbrust**
Director Mission River

"My friend Dennis tells this story of deliverance while teaching what the Bible communicates on the subject of sexual sin. It's a powerful story of a life restored to purity and authenticity by choosing God's way to break the chains of sin. Every man interested in living a life of victory should read this book."

--Pastor **Roger Andrews**



"A highway will be there, a roadway,
And it will be called the Highway of Holiness."
(Isaiah 35:8)

Changing God's Way

Changing **GOD'S WAY** By Breaking the Chains of Sin

Dennis J. Nelson, D.B.S.

HolyWalk¹Pure Press

Chicago, IL - U.S.A.

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 1:10; 2:10a; 3:1-5; Psalm 119:45.

Changing God's Way: By Breaking the Chains of Sin

Published by HolyWalkPure Press

Requests for information should be sent to:

www.TheGreatStory.info DJNelson81@gmail.com

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®. NASB. By The Lockman Foundation. Verses marked Amp. are taken from THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE® Verses marked ISV are taken from THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD VERSION...Verses marked HCSB are taken from THE HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE...Verse marked CEV are taken from THE CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION...Verses marked NIV are taken from THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION...Verses marked GNB are taken from the ... GOOD NEWS BIBLE.

ISBN 1-45630-017-2 EAN-13 9781456300173

Copyright © 2010, 2016 2nd Edition, Dennis J. Nelson

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without prior written permission from the publisher.

All stories in this book may have been changed and modified to ensure anonymity. Any omission of credit for use is unintentional and the sole responsibility of the author.

Cover Design by Dennis Nelson (Photo by Michael Armbrust).

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Nelson, Dennis, 1962-

Changing God's Way: By Breaking the Chains of Sin / Dennis J. Nelson.-1st ed.

ISBN 1-45630-017-2

1. Sex-Religious aspects-Christianity. 2. Temptation. 3. Christian men-Religious life.

Printed in the United States of America
2016

*This is dedicated to my wife,
Ruth,
who has loved me,
stood by me,
and supported me during
these 30-plus years of marriage.
You have all my love,
Dennis*



Contents:

Acknowledgments	1
Forward	3
Introduction:	
Breaking the Chains of Sin.....	5
How To Begin	15
Chapter One:	
King David: Our Example.....	17
Chapter Two:	
The Word of God and Four Hearts.....	29
Chapter Three:	
Idolatry Rooted in Pride.....	41
Chapter Four:	
Prayer, Brokenness, and Repentance.....	53
Chapter Five:	
Lust, Porn, XXX.....	63
Chapter Six:	
Renewing the Mind.....	75
Chapter Seven:	
Sexual Idolatry.....	85
Chapter Eight:	
Temptation vs. Testing.....	97
Chapter Nine:	
Fornication and Adultery.....	109
Chapter Ten:	
The Marriage Bed Restored.....	121
Chapter Eleven:	
Putting Off Sin and Putting On Righteousness.....	133
Chapter Twelve:	
In Adam? Or In Christ?.....	147
Conclusion:	
Dead Men Live Righteously.....	159
Appendix	166
About the Author	172

Notes:

"And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life,
and this life is in His Son."
(1 John 5:11)

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following men who have demonstrated how to live like a dead man “In Christ.” They serve as constant examples of how I can continue my walk upon God’s Highway of Holiness (Isa. 35:8):

Senior Pastor **Roger Andrews** cultivated God’s gifting in me through hours of encouragement, enabling me to see God’s way to change. Who would have thought that one sermon could turn into a life-changing book? Thanks for believing in me.

Michael Armbrust, church planter, and long-time friend; you are my David, and I am your Jonathan. Thanks to your “box-pushing,” I was forced to step outside of my comfort zone into the hands of God. You are the righteous man for whom I would truly lay down my life.

Pastor **Ken Behr**, my mentor, and friend. I thank you for your faith that encouraged me during the time that God began to break the chains. Your continued wisdom and friendship have impacted this work and my life so I might tell others.

Mark Iversen, 1982 seems like yesterday, when I gave my heart to Christ, and we walked together to Christ’s mile marker of water baptism. Thanks to your evangelism, prayer, and faith, I have grown from an acorn to a tree firmly rooted “In Christ.”

Doug Schmitz, my dear friend who assisted in editing and furthering this work. You are a true brother!

May God continue to bless these men for cultivating and fertilizing the soil of my heart.

THANK YOU!

Dennis



“Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ
he is a new creation (a new creature altogether);
The old [moral and spiritual condition] has passed away.
Behold, the fresh and new has come!”
(From 2 Cor. 5:17 Amp.)

Forward:

The preacher gets up before the congregation to preach. He is more than a little nervous, as he and his wife over the past few years have been very forthcoming about the sexual sin that has been a part of this man of God's life for many years. By coming forward a few years ago, and through an extended period of repentance, forgiveness, and restoration, the preacher has been restored to God's pulpit. His chains to sin were broken. Healing replaced hurt, and forgiveness replaced shame. The relationship between the Creator and the creature has been restored.

However, across town, a married man pulls into the private parking garage of the old historic hotel in the center of town. Restored, renovated and completely refurbished, the quiet landmark is in an area of town that has also been undergoing improvements. Once shabby, run down and unkempt, this hotel now has investors who have changed the lodging and made it respectable and attractive. But the man hesitates before he gets out of his car. He is all too aware that his life is much like the old hotel before the restoration. His hidden life is shabby, unkempt, and desperately in need of restoration.

All of us, men as well as women, married, single, young and old, have experienced some bondage to sin in our lives. If we have been fortunate and have escaped the chains of sin, we are still prone to a variety of things that can enslave us.

Dennis Nelson tells his story in "*Changing God's Way: Breaking the Chains of Sin.*" His introduction is a testimony to the power of God. Through Christ, we are to be free from the law of sin and death. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death." (Rom. 8:2) However, just as the Apostle Paul found that the old man was still alive and that his spirit was willing but the flesh was weak, we too can find ourselves enslaved and in bondage. This book explains the victory in changing God's way by overcoming any sin. It is a great book for men that need to overcome the all-too-common entanglements of sexual immorality, including lust and pornography.

Pastor **Ken Behr**
Faith Dialogue, FL

Notes:

“...in Him you have been made complete,
and He is the head over all rule and authority;
and in Him, you were also circumcised
with a circumcision made without hands,
in the removal of the body of the flesh
by the circumcision of Christ.” (Col. 2:10-11)



Introduction:

Breaking the Chains of Sin

This is my story: breaking the chains of sin. It is a testimony to the power of God, of His hope, and His redemption. I found that freedom only comes through repentance and the brokenness that is only found by living dead “In Christ.” Even as a mature Christian, I became proud, bound, and trapped by sin. It was not until I realized God’s hatred for sin that I learned to see my sin as He does. This was when God showed me the path to victory was not in my strength but found at the Cross. Only when I cried out with tears of repentance by casting myself upon the Rock of Jesus did I find liberty. Just as He saved me in 1982, Christ extended His graces again and broke my chains to sin.

This is a very frank and direct story of my personal walk back onto God’s Highway of Holiness. The material in the introduction and the rest of the book detail God’s view of sexuality. My hope would have been that my experiences were unique, but reports indicate that many Christian men, as high as 50 percent, struggle with sexual sin. When you read my story and others, please proceed with an open mind. Use these examples to encourage your faith and with the power of the Holy Spirit to wash clean.

But, before I begin, my freedom did not happen until I came to understand Jesus' parable. He told a story of two men: the first man trusted in his strength, while the other man fell upon the Rock of Christ. Jesus said:

“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Luke 18:10-14 NASB²)

Although I had been a Christian for many years, I became proud and allowed sexual sin to attach to my flesh. My walk back onto God's Highway of Holiness began when I realized I was more like the Pharisee and less like the sinful tax collector. God used my sin to break me and to bring me back to Him.

Because I did not know how to break my chains, I was unable to walk pure. My lusts were feeding sexual temptations, and these sins subsequently formed calluses around my heart, making it like a stone. I began living a sexualized life. It was only when I broke myself upon the Rock of Jesus that God delivered me. I made another journey to the Cross, crying: “God, be merciful to me, the sinner!”

I recall a time growing up in the 1970's when my cousins first introduced me to pornography. We would hunt for my uncle's secret Playboy stash and educate ourselves about the opposite sex. During high school, the locker room talk consisted of how far we had gotten with

² Unless otherwise cited, Bible verses are taken from the *Holy Bible: New American Standard Bible*, 1971.

our dates. Running around the sexual bases seemed perfectly natural. The culture encouraged the belief that I did not want to graduate from high school without hitting a home run. Just like the tax collector, my past sins contributed to my slavery.

Before becoming a Christian, I believed in monogamous sexual relationships, and I would only have sex with those I was dating. During this time, I rarely viewed pornography and did not need any other form of sexual stimulation.

At the end of my freshman year in college, I became the tax collector for the first time and Christ filled my life with saving grace. During those early years, God protected me during sexual temptation, and I was resolved to remaining chaste until marriage. While working as a lifeguard at the local seminary, I had several conversations with the soon to be priests about sexual temptation. One talked about his vow of celibacy and asked if I dated and how I managed my sexual drive. I discussed my prior sexual life, and said since my "born-again" experience; I would only date the woman God would tell me to marry. At the time, I did not realize the grace that was on me. Temptations did occur, but God would always provide a way of escape. (1 Cor. 10:13)

Upon graduation, I took a position as a high school teacher, girl's swimming coach, and as local pool manager. This was a time I could have fed the "lust of the eyes." But, reflecting back at this period, my personal struggles with sexual temptation were few and victories over temptation seemed easy. Even though I was in a position that could have seriously damaged my walk, God gave me the grace to "gird my loins" and to walk pure. (Eph. 6:14)

Seven years into my new life "In Christ," God told me whom to marry and gave me the most precious gift in my wife. Our first eight years were filled with spiritual and physical intimacy. After the birth of our first child, we had the new role of parents and the sex decreased. Five

years later, we had our second child, and as our work responsibilities increased, the frequency of sex decreased again. I did not know how to adjust.

Over time, I became a man who could not be intimate without first viewing pornography. On visits to the video store, I would make my way down the aisle with “Adult” flicks. I would say: “Hey, Honey, do you feel like a steamy movie tonight?” Then I would search for images that would get me aroused. After passing the visual test, I would read the backs to determine if there was enough for the evening. I did not know it, but this was defiling God’s marriage bed. My lustful desires had replaced God’s holy design. I was committing adultery in my heart, and I did not even know it.

I began to watch programs on cable that could satisfy my lust and sexual release. Once, while away on business, I order an adult movie for the 5-10 minutes so I could relax before bed. I rationalized that this was OK. It was not much different than being at home with my wife. What I did not realize was that I had begun a downward spiral into habitual sexual sin.

Around this time, my wife and I decided that I should get a vasectomy. A sperm test was required to determine the success of the procedure. I had a moral dilemma: how do I obtain this sample without masturbating? My solution was not to submit a sample and to just resume intimacy. Ironically, I became so worried about whether or not I could perform; I ended up masturbating. This was the moment I walked off God’s Highway of Holiness and onto the path of destruction. My sin soon becomes “habitualized” and viewing porn and masturbating became routine.

God began to call me to ministry. I had entered a Bible degree program and began a ministry internship at the church. Just like the Pharisee in Jesus’ parable, on the outside, I was living the perfect

Christian life. But on the inside, my heart was proud and dirty. I had become "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" and I did not even know it. (Rev. 3:17)

I became trapped in a cycle of lust, self-stimulation, guilt, shame, and repentance. I knew Jesus' words: "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Mat. 5:27-28) While I would have brief periods of success keeping the lust and flesh in check, my pride would still feed the lust.

A battle was raging inside of me, and I could not control my eyes. I would look upon any woman, undressing her, lusting, and fantasizing. I knew this was wrong, and I did not realize this was a losing battle. My problem, I enjoyed my sin, and these sins always desired more from me. (Eph. 4:19) Like a prisoner locked in a cell, I was being held captive by my sin.

After a night of stimulation, and not knowing how I would begin my mornings trying to cleanse myself, I knew I needed a victory like the one I experienced at salvation. I continued to seek Jesus and began to pray the Psalms. I rediscovered King David's prayers of repentance for sexual sin. I began to confess my sin by making the Psalms my own. I wanted what King David experienced after adultery: a clean and pure heart before God. I would pray:

"Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight...Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me...The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a

contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.” (Psa. 51:1-4b; 9-10; 17)

I knew if I continued the downward spiral of habitual sexual sin and I did not break free from its hold, I would lose everything. (Pro. 5, 6, 7) My worldly life, my family, my job, and ministry were not as important to God as my heart.

It took me three years of struggling with sexual sin before I realized I could not save myself. I could not break free. I needed God to save me just as Christ did at Calvary. Salvation from our present sins can only come through a whole-hearted trust in the Cross. “But Jesus looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written: ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone’? “Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.” (Luke 20:17-18) This is what I needed. I had to take the first step and fall on the Rock.

This breaking began when I viewed my sin through God’s eyes. My sin was as filthy, repugnant, and dirty. I cried out, like King David, as a poor sinner, beating my chest. Although I had repented many times before, I had not presented my offering of repentance with a “broken spirit” and “contrite heart.” When I fell upon the Rock, God accepted my offering and led me out of bondage.

So then, how can a man break the chains of sin? By Changing God’s Way! By changing from the inside out and walking onto His “Highway of Holiness.” (Isa. 35:8) The answer to breaking the bondages of sexual sin is simple; repentance unlocks God’s sanctifying river. (Acts 3:19) We must become like the tax collector, crying out: “God, be merciful to me, the sinner!”

Are you struggling with sexual sin? Do you need God’s grace and mercy? Christ is in the salvation business and will not reject those who seek Him like David did. It will happen to you as it did to King David

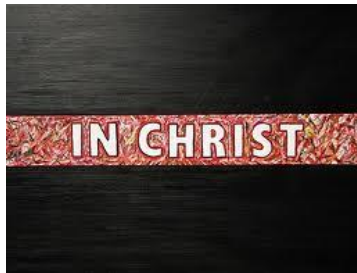
and me. Repentance from sin will obtain the favorable ear of God. Though you may be living in torments from hell now, Jesus will save and keep you from stumbling. (Psa. 116:1-6; Jude 24) It is by God's loving kindness that Christ leads us to repentance. (Rom. 2:4) The tax collector found this road. God raised Jesus from the dead, and He will save you from habitual sin. "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." (1 John 4:15-16) This is the only way out; it was mine, and it can be yours, too!

Have you ever heard His voice calling? Look at what Isaiah proclaims: " voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God." (Isa. 40:3) God calls all men to live holy. I can often tell if a Christian brother is walking the consecrated holy walk by these attributes: Are they humble, meek, contrite in heart, and broken in spirit? When I come across these men, I wonder: 'Are they another "dead man" walking?'

The walk into God's sanctified holiness is usually not instantaneous, and the road will be rocky, and difficult. However, I can guarantee that all those who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. God's grace is here today. All Christian men who empower themselves with the Holy Spirit will be set free from the shackles of sin. (Rom. 7:24-25) Will you cry out with me? "Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O LORD, I beseech You, save my life!" (Psa. 116:4)

God's grace is applied when we repentant, for there, is no forgiveness of sins without repentance. Understanding this Biblical principle causes the chains of sin to break. I realized this when I saw the chains of sin bound in sexual idolatry. I had a choice to make: I could repent and turn away from sin, or I could continue in bondage.

I finally realized that any “victory over sin was not because of my efforts but because of God’s fabulous grace!”³ The power of Christ’s resurrection will save you as He saved me. We have this promise: “Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old (previous moral and spiritual condition) has passed away. Behold, the fresh *and* new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17, Amp.)



Victory is won when we realize that “In Christ” our old sinful nature has passed away, and we are new creations. We cannot walk holy and pure before God without Christ. That was God’s purpose at Calvary; only “In Christ” do we have the hope of glory! “It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” (Gal. 5:1)

I pray that God delivers you from the chains of sexual sin. Maybe you are not experiencing temptations or habitually sinning. That is good. Over my 34 plus years in the Christian walk, I have experienced long periods of moral purity. Even so, I needed to get knocked down; I needed to become like King David. God used my sexual idolatry to lead me back onto His Highway of Holiness.

³ Steve Gallagher, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry* (Dry Ridge: Pure Life Ministries, 2007), 294.

Through these chapters and the WORKBOOK⁴, you will be shown how Abraham and others have led the way. "WHEN ABRAM was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, I am the Almighty God; walk and live habitually before Me and be perfect blameless, wholehearted, complete." (Gen. 17:1 Amp.) To change God's way, you must believe His word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the death and resurrection of Christ. God will reward every man who diligently seeks Him.

It is through Christ's accomplished work on the Cross that we live perfect, blameless, wholehearted, and completely holy. Abraham and King David chose this highway by directing their wills to the way in which they had previously walked.

"I will sing of lovingkindness and justice, To You, O LORD, I will sing praises. I will give heed to the blameless way. When will You come to me? I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil. Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure. My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; He who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me. He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me. Every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, So as to cut off from the city of the LORD all those who do iniquity." (Psa. 101:1-8)

May you use this devotional to begin and refine your walk "In Christ." Today, you can walk on His Highway of Holiness and know you are living "In Christ!"

"In Christ," I became a dead man and so can you!

⁴ See **How To Begin** to obtain a free WORKBOOK.PDF or go online to www.TheGreatStory.info.



Isaiah foretold of this road "In Christ."
He said "a highway will be there, a roadway,
And it will be called the Highway of Holiness." (Isa. 35:8)

How to Begin

Changing God's way begins with the daily washing of the mind with God's Word and seeking His face through prayer. This devotional consists of twelve chapters that are to be used with Changing God's Way: WORKBOOK. Go to www.TheGreatStory.info to download a free WORKBOOK.PDF or order a hard copy online.⁵

To plant your first-mile marker, even if you are alone, verbally pray the following statement. This reaffirms your faith in Christ. Then sign it and date it. Why do this? The Corinthians are instructed by Paul: "Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. For to this end also I wrote so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things." (2 Cor. 2:8-9)⁶

*Oh God, I am separated from You because of my sin.
The only way to You is through the blood of Jesus Christ
Who died upon the cross for my sins and arose from the
dead. I confess I am a sinner and ask Your forgiveness.
I am declaring the new life that is only found "In Christ."
I begin by asking You, Jesus, to show me how to love
You with all my heart, with all my soul, with my entire
mind, and with all my strength.*

In Jesus' Name, I Pray, AMEN.

_____ Signed⁷

Date: _____

⁵ www.amazon.com or www.TheGreatStory.info

⁶ If you are using this in a men's study group have each person profess their faith to the group.

⁷ Mile Marker #1 is your first guidepost to changing God's way. The remaining mile markers are completed in the WORKBOOK.

Changing GOD'S WAY

By Breaking the Chains of Sin

You have now taken the first step onto God's "Highway of Holiness." So, what exactly is a mile marker? Simply put, mile markers are stakes in the road that mark the distance traveled between two points. Jeremiah cried out to the people to "Set up for yourself road marks, Place for yourself guideposts; Direct your mind to the highway, The way by which you went." (Jer. 31:21) Just like highway mile markers, this devotional uses guideposts to measure your progressive change into Christ. You will be asked to "mark" God's change in your life after each WORKBOOK Lesson. This is your first step onto God's Highway #1!



"We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom so that we may present every man complete in Christ."
(Col. 1:28)



Chapter One:
King David: Our Example

**“I HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE,
A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.”
(Acts 13:22b)**

David, the greatest King of all Israel, serves as a type, a model, and an example. His life story illustrates great faith and wholehearted worship. David is chosen by God to replace King Saul. “I have found David the son of Jesse, A man after my heart, who will do all My will.” (Acts 13:22) However, it is David’s sins that cause his family and kingdom to suffer. To follow David’s path is not to emulate his failures, but rather his wholehearted devotion to God.

David failed because he got lazy, forgetting his first love, and allowing pride into the heart. He went down the wrong road and instead of cultivating a relationship with God, he chose the road that led to increasing, moral depravity. (2 Sam. 11-12) “The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns, But the path of the upright is a highway.” (Pro. 15:19)

David’s first sin was the refusal to go out to battle as befitting a king. Then one night, after retiring to bed, he awakens with sin crouching

at the door. At this moment, David had several sinless options. He could have gone back to bed, or picked up an instrument to worship God, or if he needed sexual intimacy, he could have had one of many wives. Instead, his misaligned heart causes him to prowl atop the palace towers, and his eyes are captivated by a bathing woman. David's heart covets her.

As King, David could have any virgin in all Israel and yet he chooses another man's wife. The Bible calls this sin voyeurism, and today, this is not any different than frequenting Gentleman's clubs. David does not know it yet, but his pride will bring a tornado of destruction. Afterward, he fantasizes, imagines having sex, and asks about her while making plans for seduction. In the end, David pays the consequence for sin.

The pregnancy of Bathsheba causes David to spiral deeper into sin. If Bathsheba is found to have committed adultery, she will be stoned. So David hatches a simple plan: have Uriah, the warrior husband, recalled from the front lines so he can conjugate with Bathsheba. This cover-up plan fails, and Uriah spends the first night sleeping outside his house. David adapts, inviting Uriah to a dinner feast; his new plan is to get Uriah so drunk that he will go into Bathsheba. Once again, David is thwarted, and instead, Uriah proclaims honor; that while the King's army is at war, he will not lie with his wife. Now David's sins will be uncovered.

David's actions are controlled by the fear of exposed sins. David again plots and this time it is a murderous plan. He issues a secret order sent to the front lines, causing Uriah and others to die. To solidify the conspiracy, David pretends to be surprised at Uriah's death and issues a command for revenge.

This time, David's scheme appears to be successful. Uriah is dead and after Bathsheba's time of mourning, David then takes her as a wife. He believes the sins are hidden. However, the knowledge of the sin

becomes known to the prophet, Nathan and issuing God's judgment, David's sins are exposed to all. Immediately, David repents: "I have sinned against the LORD." (2 Sam. 12:13b) Even though his proclamation is short, this is the path we must follow to become clean.

Some Christians, whose sins are hidden, choose not to change. They are like King Saul, who sought repentance with tears but only had worldly regret. (2 Cor. 7:10) (Although Saul cried out to God, his heart was still hard.) I fear that many in the church today would rather continue in sin than purify their hearts. (Jam. 4:8b) They have become like Saul and refused to change God's way.

Jeremiah instructs the people to return to the highway in which they had gone. They were sent into captivity, and God was telling Israel to remember the way back to Him. God tells them to "Set up for yourself road marks, Place for yourself guideposts; Direct your mind to the highway, The way by which you went. (Jer. 31:21a) Because David had known God's saving grace before sin, he knew how to return. He knew God's guidepost to the holy highway was through repentance. King David's broken-heartedness is our example to change, God's way.

Psalm 51 records David's "Highway to Holiness":

"Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin, my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part, You will make me know wisdom. Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins And

blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise. For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." (Psa. 51:1-17)

He knew that God only accepts the sacrifices of a broken spirit; a broken, and contrite heart. David's repentance cleanses the sin, and he is righteously restored. "And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die." (2 Sam. 12:13b) David's repentance is the road to restoration.

But what was David's first step away from God's path? Rather than fulfilling the King's duty and leading the army into battle, he stays home with the women and children. His sexual lust grows out of a proud heart, and the consequences follow him the rest of his days. Shed blood is required to cover sin. Bathsheba's son dies, and David's reign will never achieve all that God had planned.

David has lost God's best and his sins are passed onto Absalom and Solomon. David's wives are raped by Absalom in broad daylight. "So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went into his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel." (2 Sam. 16:22) And just like his father, Solomon's uncontrollable lusts turn his heart away from God. "Solomon held fast to these in love...and his wives turned his heart away." (1 Kin. 11:2-4) Neither of these sons can live chaste, holy, or honor God's marriage bed.

Since the fall, the human heart has become predisposed to sin. The more a person sins, the less they realize its hold. Sexual sins always consume and chains the flesh. A sinner must draw near to God so that the light of His Word can uncover his secrets. Deliverance from sin is not possible until we change God's way.



A heart can only be cleansed by repentance. Because a broken heart unlocks God's cleansing mercies.

This begins with the will and must be followed by a step of faith. It is the choice that every repentant sinner must make under the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is said of Martin Luther that during morning shaves, he would look into the mirror of his heart. If he saw sprouts of sin growing, he would take hold, repent and pluck them out. I was trapped in my sexual sin; I did not comprehend my depravity. In my strength, I would master one sin and then another would present itself. I did not know how to pluck out sin like Luther.

As a biblical counselor, ministering to those who are desperate for God, I have discovered that everyone who comes to Christ must make a choice. Those who are bound to sin need to break free by following David's example. I once told a man I had counseled that he needed to release the control of his life so that God could break the chains of sin. I read: "But Jesus looked at them and said, 'What then is

this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.'" (Luke 20:17-18) He looked at me perplexed and asked if I would explain it. Afterward, I was not sure if he got it, but he assured me and would try.

A few weeks later, I asked: "Ted, are you living clean and broken before God?" He responded: "I get it now. It is like walking to the top of a building and jumping off. I know that the only way I can be delivered from my sin is to take a leap of faith and land upon the Rock, lest the Rock come down and scatter me to dust!" Ted was getting it. He was becoming like the tax collector. Changing God's way requires wholehearted faith "In Christ!"

The Bible declares that God has placed within everyone the ability to know Him. "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" (Psa. 14:1, 53:1) God nurtures, feeds and grows His seeds. "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." (Rom. 1:20) God understands the heart, for He created it.

God has provided "In Christ" all that is necessary to break sexual bondages. "To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory...so that we may present every man complete in Christ..." (Col. 1:27-28) At the time of one's conversion, God's sanctifying Holy Spirit begins the work of making you complete. God's way to change is by filling us with His eternal hope "In Christ." The work of God, changing His way, begins with the will. It is through the willingness to submit the mind, the will, and the emotions to the Lordship of Jesus Christ that God releases grace.

The heart is the center of the personality and all that we do proceeds from it. Changing the heart is the only way to change sinful behaviors. God knew this when He promised to clean the heart with a circumcision made without hands. (Col. 2:11) When our old man (Adam) is cut away, God places the new man (Christ) in our heart. Stephen warned the religious: "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did." (Acts 7:51) Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be "born again" to enter God's Kingdom.

Maybe in appearance you're living the good life; you attend church, give money in the offering, go to work, and pay the bills. I have met men who say: "I am a pretty good guy compared to the rest!" When I hear this from a counselee, I read the Ten Commandments to them and ask if they can name one Commandment they have never violated? When they have no defense, I then proclaim Jesus' view of man: "...That which proceeds out of the man that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man." (Mark 7:20-23) When compared to the Holy God, all our righteousness is as filthy rags.

Have you repented of all known sins?

Do you have any secret sins hiding in your closet?

Have you plucked the sin from the garden of your heart?

Christianity is a heart issue. Those who do not come to God with a broken and contrite heart will never break the chains of sin. Changing

God's way is only possible by traveling down the same road we have walked at salvation. Salvation from sin is always linked to the confession of sin, repentance, and the continual turning away from sin. God then releases Christ's cleansing waters. (Jam. 5:16; Acts 3:19)

King Solomon wrote about regrets: "This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one fate for all men. Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards, they go to the dead." (Ecc. 9:3) The prophet Jeremiah said: "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9) Sin will take hold of the heart and cause us to feel like we are in control like we can handle it. If left to our strength, we will never break free.

It is easier for a man to live with habitual sin than to submit to God. Submission requires a changing from the inside out, from the heart, through the mind, and into actions that bear Godly fruit. Deeply-rooted sins go straight into the heart. The following chapters and WORKBOOK Lessons use the power of God's Word. The Holy Spirit will convict you of sin and then you will need to choose. It will be your will that gets you back onto God's Highway of Holiness, and those of you who are in bondage to sin will have to fall upon the Rock. And when you do, you will find as David did, His grace, mercy, and loving-kindness.

Maybe you are like most men and live a very complex life like the character, Shrek. He compared himself to an onion made of many layers. Peeling back a man's layers takes time, persistence, and determined resolution. Many of your past feelings, thoughts and habits will distract you from seeing sin.

Modifying behaviors God's way is accomplished by putting off sin and putting on Christ's righteousness. Internal changes are always instantaneous, yet external behavioral changes take time. Usually, the amount of time needed to create new godly habits is directly proportional

to the period bound to a particular sin. Even though forgiveness is immediate, deliverance from habitual sin is often worked through testing and consecration. Like David, God's discipline produces humble obedience.

God has the same righteous standard for everyone. We must see sin as He sees it and the solution from 2,000 years ago. We must walk to the Cross and lay down our lives to live dead "In Christ." Habitual sexual sinners will have to renew their minds. The six inches between the ears is where the victory begins. When you become like the sinful tax collector, godly change will occur, and you will then understand God's hatred for sin. The washing of the mind through God's Word is the only way to know God's thoughts. Renewing the mind is to think as God thinks and this leads to the healing of the soul.

He will discipline those who profess Christ because of His love. God will use confrontation of sin so that He can save the lost. God did this to David, and, if needed, He will do it to you.

A sinner can only cry out in true repentance when they have the knowledge of sin. Mercy cannot be extended unless we know our sins grieve God. He extended mercy to King David, He did it for me, and His mercy is here for you.

Chuck Swindoll explains this condition of brokenness:

"When God wants to do an impossible task, He takes an impossible man and breaks him. As the evangelist, Charles Spurgeon, said, "We are but men, frail, feeble, and apt to faint.' I am intrigued by the word 'broken.' It means, literally, 'shattered.' My sacrifice to God, according to Psalm 51:17, is a shattered spirit and a bruised heart. It is not until the pride of our heart is shattered that we will begin to understand the deep things of God.

The shattering and the bruising are so designed by God for the preparation of his spokesman. As pastors, we understand what it means to be frail. God will not

despise a broken and contrite heart. All of God's giants have been weak men. Every man that sits on this platform is a weak man. Every one of us is frail, feeble, and apt to faint. The greatest gift you can give your congregation is a genuine model of your humanity. Admit your weakness or your unresolved conflicts, and then let yourself be broken about it by God.

It may be between you and your wife; it may be between you and your staff member; it may be an unforgiving spirit, even alcoholism, incest, pornography—maybe gluttony, or plagiarism, or a critical spirit. It could be the sin of pride or those sins that Jesus hated most, those of hypocrisy. Release it to God. If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”⁸

The road to Changing God's way is only found through a repentant, broken, and contrite heart. “The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who watches his way preserves his life.” (Pro. 16:17)

Hope is the anchor of faith and discovering who you are “In Christ” will fundamentally change your walk. Jesus was 100 percent human, and it is through this bond that we can emulate Him. It is “In Him” that we can see the way to freedom. (Heb. 11) Pray the following prayer aloud making a public affirmation of your faith. This will be your second-mile marker on the Highway of Holiness. Change comes by inviting Christ to shine His truth into the heart. (Pray this aloud):

Lord, make me the blessed man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD. I will become like a tree planted by the water of Your Word; I will extend my roots by Your stream of truth. I do not fear when the heat of trials and testing come. My leaves will be green, yielding Your righteous fruit. I know that my heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick, and only You can understand. Lord, show me my sins and acquit me of my hidden faults. Keep me from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me; then I will be blameless,

⁸ Chuck Swindoll, “What it means to be broken!” available from *NET BIBLE*, <www.net.bible.org/illustration.php?id=617> (accessed October 18, 2010).

and I shall be acquitted of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my Rock, and my Redeemer. Jesus, open the eyes of my heart so that You will change me from the inside out. In Jesus' Name I Pray! (Adapted from Jer. 17:7-9; Psa. 19:12-14)

Here are God's promises to you: "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." (Eze. 36:26) God's answer to sin is that He will give us a new heart – heart that is made by Christ through a circumcision made without hands. (Col. 2:11) A sinner needs a new heart. The heart is the key to Changing God's Way!



We only continue to change by embracing this new identity "In Christ." The change that God requires is generated from the inside out. Changing God's way is becoming (in behavior and habit) what we already are "In Christ!" This is the beginning of your journey to sanctification. "I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart." (Jer. 24:7)⁹

⁹ Begin your walk by completing WORKBOOK: Lesson #1.

Notes:

“Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ
for all those who believe; for there is no distinction.”
(Rom. 3:22)

ABOUT:

Dennis J. Nelson D.B.S.

Dennis J. Nelson, D. B. S., is a biblical counselor, ordained minister, chaplain, and author of *Praying the Heavens through Prayer, Fasting, and the Word*, the men's devotional *Changing God's Way by Breaking the Chains of Sin* and the companion Bible study *Changing God's Way - WORKBOOK*. The Great Story with Dennis J. Nelson operates as a sole proprietorship under the covering of the local church. As a Counselor, he specializes in marriage counseling, to those who are experiencing trials in life, and those who need deeper healing.

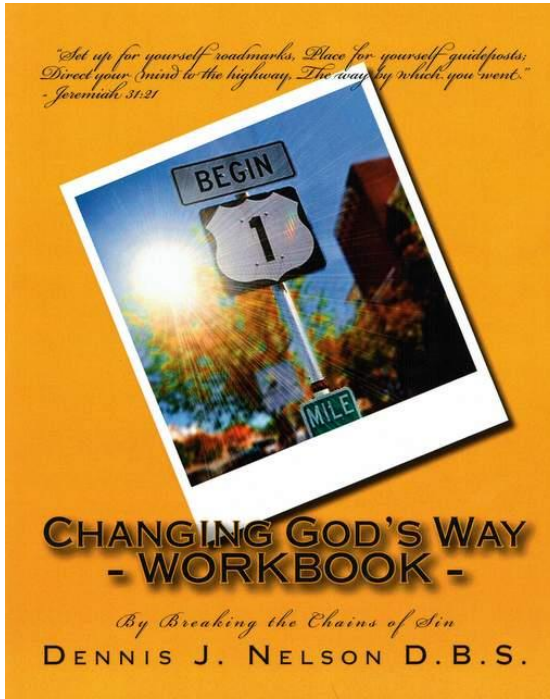


As we minister in Christ's grace and truth, may we walk together on
God's Highway of Holiness that is only found "In Christ."

Living as a dead man In Christ,

Dennis J. Nelson D.B.S.

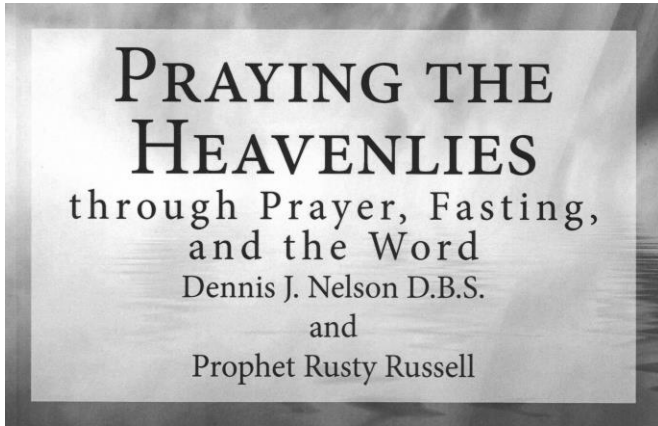
For more information:
www.TheGreatStory.info



Changing God's Way By Breaking the Chains of Sin -WORKBOOK-

Changing God's way begins with washing the mind with God's word and seeking His face daily through prayer. This WORKBOOK is to be used with the book Changing God's Way By Breaking The Chains of Sins. By completing the lessons a man will learn how to change God's way by breaking the chains of habitual sin.

To order:
www.TheGreatStory.info or any online bookstore.



"Prayer is our weapon to battle the dark forces. As I share the stories of God's great protection and deliverance from evil, I hope to convey some practical principles that will assist you in wrestling the world rulers. These experiences have taught me this one thing; the heavenly battles belong to the Lord. It is my desire that you will take a step in learning the Whys? And the Hows? Of pursuing God through Prayer, Fasting, and the Word. It is only through unified prayers, fasting, and standing together that we can raise the shield of faith in defeating the enemies flaming arrows."

To ORDER:

*"Praying the Heavens:
Through Prayer, Fasting, and the Word"*

Authors: Dennis J Nelson D.B.S. and Prophet Rusty Russell

List Price: \$12.95

ISBN-13: 978-1500908973

ISBN-10: 1500908975

www.TheGreatStory.info or any online bookstore.