

# Helping readers get a divine “do-over”

Dr. Dan and Cathy Erickson, of LSCC, map the path to a healing journey.

by JULIA LLOYD

Do-overs are common in kids' games. But what about when an adult needs a fresh start?

Dr. Dan and Cathy Erickson of LSCC have the answer: “God Loves Do-Overs.”

That's both the title of their new book and the message they are sharing with hurting people in Lee's Summit and across the nation.

“In a baseball game, you get three strikes,” said Dan, a pastor at LSCC and the chief servant leader of People Matter Ministries. “With God, you get all the strikes you need.”

The new book follows Dan's previous work, “Finding Your Greater Yes!”, which explores how people can achieve their potential in Christ.

“God Loves Do-Overs” is based on the Ericksons' nearly four decades of experience in ministry and illustrates how hurting people can break out of a cycle of rejection. A recurring theme is, “When the past lives in the present, it robs you of your future.”

The cycle of rejection leads people to shame, unwise choices, guilt and “the blame game.”

The Ericksons point out that the key to breaking the cycle is to understand that Christ came to forgive our sin and to wipe away our shame, giving us a new beginning. When we correctly understand God's love and grace, we will realize that we can have a fresh start every day. While it's never easy to get out of a rut, the Ericksons provide practical, biblical steps to help people reclaim their lives.

The book takes an in-depth look at the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15 and explains its relevance to believers today. The loving father in the story restored his son's identity, significance, purpose and destiny. In the same way, Christ built a bridge of acceptance for us on the cross. Once we understand that Christ accepts us in spite of our past, we are able to be reconciled (brought into a right relationship) to God.

The Ericksons share honestly that the Christian

life will be characterized by many do-overs. But failure, they say, is not final. In fact, they recommend “failing forward.” What does that mean?

“It means that as long as I'm alive, I'm going to fail,” Dan said. “I'm going to sin. But we can either fail backward and land on our knees, recognizing again that God can bring me through this. That's where the fresh start is.”

When we “fail forward,” we don't have to stumble into the cycle of rejection. Instead, we can confidently step across the bridge of acceptance.

The book, however, does not stop with a focus on the individual. Believers who experience restoration and a fresh start must begin a journey on what the Ericksons call “the highway of reconciliation.”

Since we have been reconciled to God, “we are to be ministers of reconciliation,” said Dan. “We need to now go change our world.” The Ericksons point out that others-focused living is not a luxury, but is critical to a healthy life that steers clear of the cycle of rejection.

Dan said the book is designed for personal use but also includes a study guide, making it an empowering resource for small group and support group discussions. Those who get everything right the first time don't need to read this book. But the rest of us will find inspiration for a fresh start.

Writer Julia Lloyd is a member of LSCC.



## Call to action

- Purchase and read “God Loves Do-Overs” via [www.peoplesmatterministries.com](http://www.peoplesmatterministries.com).
- Learn more about Dr. Dan and Cathy Erickson's People Matter Ministries through the Web site or contact Dan at [derickson@peoplesmatterministries.com](mailto:derickson@peoplesmatterministries.com) or 816.679.7058.
- Pray that the book will be read widely and lead to a healing journey in many lives.

