

REPENTANCE: Restoring Your Relationship with God

Repentance is a forgotten concept in much of the Christian church today. It may be forgotten by many people, but it is not forgotten by God. In fact, without repentance our righteousness is as filthy rags. It is worthless and we are just as filthy as the worst sinner on the planet. The times in which we are living are incredibly evil and we are living in the last of the last days before Jesus comes to set up His kingdom on earth. This teaching will help you learn the importance of repentance as part of your daily walk. Repentance is an incredibly powerful weapon against Satan's strategies against you. Repentance completely eliminates the legal ground the Accuser has against you.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Repentance is defined in Webster's Dictionary as "to feel or show that you are sorry for something bad or wrong that you did and that you want to do what is right." Repentance is making the conscious decision to turn from your current choices and embracing God's will for your life. You can't walk East and West at the same time. Your back will be facing one direction or the other. Repentance is making the decision to stop doing it your way and letting God fill your life with His plans and purposes.

Repentance is the very first step in salvation. In fact, it is impossible to receive salvation WITHOUT repentance. John the Baptist came before Jesus preaching repentance. Matthew 3:1-2 says "***In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'***" The kingdom of God has come to mankind and repentance is the gateway into this kingdom. After Jesus returned from His time in the wilderness, He began to preach repentance. Matthew 4:17 says "***From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'***" Without repentance, it is impossible to be accepted by God. It is through repentance that grace comes. Grace will not be applied to a person's sin unless there is repentance.

What is repentance? Repentance is acknowledging that you have missed the mark and fallen short of God's glory. Romans 3:23 says "***For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.***" In Alcoholics Anonymous the first step in recovery is acknowledging that you have a problem with alcohol. Likewise, the first step in repentance is acknowledging to God your sinful

state. Repentance is making the conscious choice to turn and go in the other direction—towards God. Repentance is NOT saying “I’m sorry Lord” and continuing to do the things you have been doing. True repentance will bear the fruit of it.

John the Baptist told the Pharisees to start bearing the fruit of repentance. Matthew 3:7-9 says “***But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.”*** John sure didn’t pull any punches, did he? True repentance will be evident in your words and in your behavior.

WHY DO I HAVE TO REPENT?

Repentance is a mandatory requirement for anyone seeking God’s grace. The Word of God is clear on why it is necessary for us to repent of our sins.

Isaiah 30:15 says “***For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: In repentance and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and faith shall be your strength.” But you would not.***”

Acts 3:19 says “***Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.***”

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 says “***Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.***”

There is no remission of sin without repentance because repentance is directly tied to the Blood of Jesus. Hebrews 9:22 says “***And according to the law, almost all things are purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.***” The Blood cannot be applied to anything other than a repentant heart.

God is very orderly. He has set the path of salvation for us to follow. It must be done His way or it simply cannot be done. The tail doesn’t wag the dog! Entrance into the kingdom of God requires the ID of repentance. We are not legally allowed to drive a vehicle in America without a license to do so. The only way we can get behind the wheel is to be able to prove to a police officer that we have permission to be on the road. Repentance is our “license” to enter the kingdom of God. Without it, we are outside the kingdom and subject to Satan’s attacks.

Repentance has more to do with the state of our hearts before God than the words of our mouth. Saying “I’m sorry I had sex with that person Lord” but in your heart, you know you would do it again should the opportunity arise. This is NOT repentance. It’s not even a sincere apology! It is rebellion and it puts you squarely in Satan’s realm and vulnerable to his attacks and the sin of fornication is still there for Satan to use against you.

Why do I have to repent? Because, although, Jesus paid for everyone’s sins over two thousand years ago, it is up to us to take hold of that benefit and apply it to our lives. We take hold of it through repentance. People say, “But I did repent 20 years ago when I asked Jesus into my heart...doesn’t that count?” Repentance is required on an as needed basis. What are you doing today? Let’s look at what the book of Ezekiel says about this:

“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore, hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, You, shall surely die, and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless, if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also, you will have delivered your soul.” (Ezekiel 3:17-21 NKJV). God is the God of the NOW. Today is the day of salvation. Are you serving Him today? You can’t live in the past. When a person really meets Jesus Christ, they are never the same. It is impossible to have an encounter with Him and remain the same. A TRUE conversion to Christianity will bear the fruit of it. –and that fruit comes from true repentance. We must all take inventory of our spiritual lives before God on a regular basis. If our hearts convict us we need to repent and get things settled. We are not promised tomorrow. That is not to say that He is waiting to throw you into Hell if you say a cuss word and then die of a heart attack before you say, “I repent Lord.” I’m not saying that. I’m saying that your heart must be tender and pliable in His hands. That is a repentant heart. He can work with a repentant person. When our hearts are repentant, we feel His conviction

immediately. It is at this point when we go to Him and repent and get cleansed by the Blood of Jesus.

There is a parallel world that we, who are in the earth are not fully aware of. It is the spirit world. It is the realm where the kingdom of God is. John 4:24 says “***God is a Spirit and those who seek to worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.***” To understand repentance, we must understand how sin affects us in the spirit-world.

Sin came in to the earth through the first humans: Adam and Eve. This brought the sin-nature into every human being born since that time. We are born heading for destruction. **But God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him should not perish, but have *everlasting life.***” (John 3:16) Jesus Christ came, lived a sinless life, gave His life on the Cross and rose from the grave for one purpose: to reconcile you and I back to the Father. He paid the price, and redemption is there for us when we repent of our sins and ask Jesus Christ to be Lord of our lives. Jesus defeated all the power of Satan on the Cross and through His resurrection from the grave. When we sin, Satan starts licking his lips because he knows he can attack us using our sins as weapons against us. Let’s look at two scenarios

Jimmy has never been to church. His whole life he has done what he wanted, when he wanted and the way he wanted. He was in control of his life, or so he thought. Jimmy loved to party and he was the life of the party. Jimmy lived like there was no tomorrow. If Jimmy were to die at this moment, he would go to Hell because Jesus’ Blood has not washed away his sins through repentance and forgiveness. He’s lost and can do nothing to save himself. But there is a friend in Jimmy’s life that God wants to use to give him the opportunity to repent and come to Jesus. This person’s name is Ray. Ray knows God wants him to talk to Jimmy, but he is afraid of what Jimmy will say to him and about him to others. So, he doesn’t say a word. Jimmy gets behind the wheel after a night of partying and dies in a car crash. He is now lost forever. Jimmy did not repent. His died in his sins. He went to Hell and will eventually end up in the lake of fire with Satan and his angels. If Jimmy would have obeyed God when the Spirit spoke to Him, things may have been different. God loves everyone very much and it hurt His heart to lose Jimmy because Ray was afraid.

Now let’s reverse this and Ray hears God’s voice and jumps in excitement to share the Gospel with Jimmy! Ray calls Jimmy up and asks him to go to lunch with him. Jimmy is hungover from the night before and lately has been getting tired of all the partying. He’s even wondering if there is more to life than this. They meet and sure enough, the Holy Spirit directs Ray when to

Jesus. Jimmy feels the conviction of the Holy Spirit for his sinful life and makes the decision to follow Jesus. He repents right there and gets cleansed with the blood of Jesus. Jimmy doesn't die in that car crash because he quit drinking and partying and went on to win souls for Jesus.

Jimmy quit living like he did previously. He quit hanging around the bad influences. He quit drinking and he started walking in the Christian lifestyle. That is repentance! A soul was saved from destruction because of one man's obedience.

Repentance is not a one-time event. The Apostle Paul says, "I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." (I Corinthians 15:31). If we are diligent to establish an intimate relationship with the Father through Jesus Christ, we can overcome sin every day. Can we say we'll never fall short of His glory? No! Sometimes we may mess up, but we don't have to. But if we do, be quick to repent. and don't let the sun go down on a sin else it will gain a foothold and become a stumbling block. Repentance is like taking a spiritual shower. It is a precious gift of God. Repentance is a powerful weapon to defeat Satan's attacks. Repentance is a beautiful word.

REPENTANCE AND GRACE

In today's world, repentance is a four-letter word. They teach that grace covers sins, and it does, but they are leaving out the ingredient of repentance. God gives people a space of time to repent. That is the grace of God. However, sooner or later, if no repentance is forthcoming, God will issue judgment in that person's life. The blood of Jesus is the only thing that eradicates sin from our lives and the blood of the Lamb won't be applied without repentance. It is just that plain and simple. No amount of wishing it were otherwise will change that.

People always want their cake and eat it too. They want their ticket to heaven but they want to enjoy the pleasures of the world at the same time. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news but believing this is like believing in Santa Claus. Sooner or later you will find out it's just a fairy tale and believe me, you don't want to find out when you die and judgement is set for you! There are lots of people in Hell who can testify to the reality of believing in the "greasy grace" doctrine.

Did you know that repentance must be granted by God? His grace is what moves the Holy Spirit to convict you of sin. Repentance is a gift from God because without the conviction of the Holy Spirit, you will just go along without realizing the peril you are in. It is for this reason that God has told His people to always pray for those who are lost and outside the kingdom! Intercessory prayer brings the grace to grant repentance to the lost! There is nothing more powerful OR pleasing

to God than to pray for the lost. When someone is steeped in sin and comfortable with it, they need the intercessory prayers of the people of God to grant them repentance. What does this mean? When repentance is granted, the Holy Spirit will begin to draw them to God. They will begin to feel bad about their sin. That is the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He is the ONLY One who brings conviction of sin. It is at this point that the person has the opportunity to choose to repent or continue in their sin. We all have been given a free will to choose God or our own way. The person will either repent and turn away from their sin or reject the conviction and continue in the sin. As long as someone is praying for that person, God will continue to draw them; even if they reject Him time and again. Don't stop praying for the lost! There is always a chance as long as they are alive. Let's look at this scenario: 2 Timothy 2:24-25 says ***“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”***

The last time we saw Jimmy, he was off and running full steam ahead for God. Boldly proclaiming the Gospel and winning souls! But Jimmy is a young Christian, not fully mature in the Lord and he still has areas in his life that are weak and the enemy works on those areas to cause him to sin. One of these areas is his ex-girlfriend. He was so in love with her, but she wants nothing to do with God. Because their relationship was sexual it is difficult for Jimmy to pull completely away from her. They have a strong sexual bond, or “soul-tie” that Satan uses to pull Jimmy back into sexual sin. Jimmy ran into her one evening and ended up going home with her. Afterwards, the conviction of the Holy Spirit was all over Jimmy. He felt terrible because he knew he had hurt the Lord Jesus. Jimmy made the decision to completely break away from his ex-girlfriend and told her so. He left and went home and repented before God sincerely. The grace of God was issued to him and he was cleansed by the blood of Jesus. He felt so clean! The grace issued to Jimmy was able to keep him strong in this area. The Lord broke the soul-tie between them and he no longer felt the same about her. Jimmy was quick to repent and because he was, God immediately blessed him with grace and forgiveness—and victory in this area!

THE PROTOCOL OF REPENTANCE

If you are reading this chapter, then you are probably more than a little interested in learning HOW to repent effectively. There is a protocol to repentance because you are bringing your sin-stained life to the Creator of the universe for cleansing. He is THE Great God. He is the Almighty

One. The Holy One and He requires a protocol to obtaining His grace. There is nothing haphazard about anything God does. Everything has a specific purpose. The protocol of repentance is as follows:

Acknowledge that you need forgiveness of sin – This is the most critical part of the whole process because when you can acknowledge your sin, then you will know that repentance has been granted to you. Remember, that repentance is in the HEART, not the head. God looks on the HEART and He weighs the motives of the heart. A person that says, “I’m sorry Lord, but I just can’t forgive that person” has no true repentance in their heart. They want to hold on to bitterness and unforgiveness. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 7:10 “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.” God must give it to you! Part of His GRACE is the issuance of repentance. It is the conviction of the Holy Spirit that brings us to the place where we can acknowledge that we have sinned or are a lost sinner.

Confess your sins to God through prayers of repentance – The next step is to tell God all about the sin. You can tell Him because He knows about it anyway! Just lay it all out there honestly and directly. GRACE comes in with the boldness to speak to God directly and honestly. The Bible says that “we can come boldly to His throne of GRACE to find help in times of trouble.” There is always a pile of trouble where sin is! Run to Him when you mess up. Take that spiritual shower and He will restore you so completely your sin won’t even exist. It is blotted out and erased by the blood of Jesus. Isn’t that good news? Isn’t God so good?

Receive by faith His forgiveness through the blood of Jesus – The next step is to receive His forgiveness. Believe and expect His forgiveness to wash away your sin completely. Suppose you are a guest in someone’s house and they bring you to a beautiful bathroom to use while you are there. It’s full of all the amenities that make a great bathroom a great bathroom. But if you just stand and admire it but don’t use it, it is not doing you any good. It’s the same thing with God’s grace and forgiveness—you must step in to the shower to get clean.

Stop doing the sinful activities and start following Jesus and His ways with all your heart. – This is the final step in the protocol of repentance. However, this step cannot be accomplished unless the repentance is TRUE and SINCERE. When Jesus touches your life, you are never the same. When His forgiveness and His blood covers you, your life WILL bear the fruit of it. Like Jimmy, when he repented, he gave up his girlfriend for Jesus. Following Jesus will require sacrifices to be made by each of us. If you are truly in love with Jesus, there is nothing and I mean NOTHING that can compare to His presence in your life!

Examine your heart and life every day and if you feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit in a certain area, be quick to repent and bring it to God. Repentance is a spiritual shower. There is nothing more refreshing than a hot, steamy shower after a hard day's work. You just feel good! It is the same with repentance. The blood of Jesus washes away the filthiness of sin and we are squeaky clean before our God and Father. Isn't God good?

Repentance is part of the Christian walk every single day because we live in a fallen world where the temptation to fall short of the glory of God is everywhere. We can fall short with our attitudes, our faithlessness, our words and our deeds. It is very important that we all spend quality time with God every day. This communication time with Him, will bring the conviction of sin and we can deal with it right then.

When you overcome the sin in your life through the protocol of repentance, you will discover the true meaning of living. A life spent following the Lord is the greatest adventure that you will ever know.

THE RESULTS OF REPENTANCE

What are the results of repentance? What happens when you truly repent? There are two main areas that showcase the fruit of repentance. The first area is your life and the second area is in the spirit world. Let's look at each of these areas a little closer.

Your life will show what is going on in your heart. Your words and your decisions will show what is in your heart. When true repentance is done, the fruit it bears is the fruit of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. What does this mean? It means that if the Holy Spirit convicted you of something in your life that is not in God's best plan for you, such as smoking, you will no longer smoke. If He convicted you of drinking, you would stop drinking or find help in getting off alcohol or drugs. If He convicted you of sexual sin, whether it is heterosexual or homosexual, fornication or adultery, you would no longer be doing it. The only sexual activity ordained by God in His Word is Biblical marriage between one man and one woman. Anything else is outside of His glory and outside the Kingdom. Engaging in it will be sin or falling short of His standard in this area. Does this mean that God hates anyone who is participating in these acts? No! He loves, loves, loves everyone. However, these activities result in a split in the relationship with God and there is no way to return except through true repentance and restoration of the relationship by God. The list could go on for a long time, but the point is that when true repentance is made in a person's life, there will be a visible change in their life. It will be seen in their words **AND** their deeds.

The result of repentance has a direct impact in the spirit world—namely Satan’s realm. When we sin, Satan’s forces take note of it. If we fail to repent quickly, Satan begins to build a legal “case” against us in the Court of Heaven. We see this truth in Revelation 12:10 “***Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.”***” Satan is relentless in his pursuit of our destruction. Because Jesus defeated him so completely on the Cross, he will use our UNREPENTANT sins against us. Let’s look at this scenario:

Jimmy has been serving the Lord for some time now and has grown a lot. He has overcome a lot of besetting sins. Jimmy got real busy doing things for the Lord that he forgot about his personal relationship with Him. His prayer life slacked off, his studying of the Word faded and soon he began to watch TV shows that he knew were anti-Christ. Occult horror movies were what he used to watch when he was in the world. His life grew cold towards God through this compromise. Unknown to Jimmy, Satan had built a case against him and took it to the Court of Heaven. He demanded to sift Jimmy like wheat. He got Peter, why not Jimmy too? Jimmy opened the door for him through sin. The sin of prayerlessness, disobedience to God’s known and perfect will for Jimmy. Jimmy was oblivious because his conscience was seared from the sin. But Ray, Jimmy’s long-time friend got a burden to pray for him from the Holy Spirit. So, every night Ray lifted Jimmy to the Lord for repentance to be granted. For his spiritual eyes to be opened. The Lord heard Ray’s prayers and granted grace towards Jimmy. In other words, Satan was not allowed to sift him. He was granted a space of time to repent. The Holy Spirit began working in Jimmy’s heart and gave Ray another opportunity to talk to him. Through the gift of repentance, Jimmy came to his senses and returned wholeheartedly to the Lord.

The beauty of repentance is that it completely takes the wind out of Satan’s sail against us. When we repent, and the blood of Jesus is applied to the sin, it is completely dissolved and evaporated like a puff of smoke. Then the Father, has the pleasure of telling Satan the case is dismissed. Repentance is a gift and a weapon at the same time. To overcome Satan’s legal maneuvers in the Court of Heaven, it takes quick repentance to eliminate all legal ground. Remember this: in the spirit world, it is all about LEGALITIES. God has set forth eternal laws that the entire universe is bound by and that includes mankind and the earth. Satan knows this very well. Repentance is the knockout punch to stop his evil plans against us! Repentance is the doorway to restoration to the beautiful relationship with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ. Are you

away? Please check out the prayers repentance on the “Repentance Prayers” page of this blog and be restored instantly when you sincerely pray it and turn back to God and leave it behind you.

Blessings everyone...