

In search of...

Truth & Right

Volume 10 Issue 50

December 13, 2015

What Produces Repentance?

Have you ever wondered why David, ***"a man after God's own heart"*** (Acts 13:22; 1 Sam. 13:14), never showed any sign of remorse over committing adultery with Bathsheba and his attempted deception and ultimate murder of her husband (2 Sam. 11)? After all, it was David's faith that motivated him to face the giant Goliath (1 Sam. 17), and it was his love for God and compassion for others that kept him from killing Saul, his enemy, when he had the chance (1 Sam. 24, 26). This same man would later showed kindness to the crippled grandson of his slain enemy (2 Sam. 9), and yet a short time after that he would give in to his lustful temptations and sleep with the wife of one of his most loyal soldiers, all while giving no sign of feeling guilty about his sins.

Yet, this all changed – apparently in an abrupt manner – when the prophet Nathan called him out on the carpet for his sins with the forceful accusation, ***"You are the man!"*** (2 Sam. 12:1-15). One minute

David, blind to the fact that Nathan's story of the rich man who killed the poor man's one prized lamb related to his own sin, was indignant over the perceived sins of others. The next minute, after being indicted for his adultery, deception, enticements to drunkenness (cf. Hab. 2:15), and murder, David was confessing his sin against God with the greatest of sorrow and remorse (Ps. 51:1-15). What brought the penitent change of heart?

First, Nathan forcefully brought David's sins to his attention by directly attributing the sinful actions of the rich man in the parable to the king himself while also warning him of the consequences of his wrongdoing (2 Sam. 12:1-7, 9-12). Too often, we Christians see their brethren commit sin and naively hope that they will repent without having to inconvenience ourselves with the potential awkwardness of rebuking and warning them. This shows within us a lack of spirituality (Gal. 6:1) and

concern for the well-being of their souls and our own (James 5:19-20; Ezek. 3:17-21). Repentance – and forgiveness itself – will never come without a direct acknowledgement of the wrong done (1 John 1:9) and fear of God's wrathful punishment (Rom. 2:4-11; Heb. 12:28-29). If we want to bring about a change of heart within the sinner, we must rebuke and warn them lovingly and truthfully (Eph. 4:15; Acts 2:36-37), humbly and gently rather than argumentatively (2 Tim. 2:24-26), and yet sharply if need be (Tit. 1:13). We must also never forget that we ourselves will never truly repent of ourselves without first acknowledging our wrongs with honest and open hearts (Luke 8:15) while having that godly fear (2 Cor. 5:11).

Secondly, Nathan reminded David of God's great love for him by listing all the blessings the Creator had bestowed upon the king (2 Sam. 12:7-8). In Steven Spielberg's epic World War II drama *Saving Private Ryan*, Private James Ryan (Matt Damon) is saved from death by the sacrifice of Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks) and most of his platoon. Decades later, an elderly Ryan looks down at Miller's grave at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial and tearfully confesses that he's tried to live his life the best he could in order to atone for Miller giving his life for his. Many veterans whose friends have died in battle to save them feel the same way. Yet God gave a much greater sacrifice when he gave his Son up to die a horrendous death on a cross to save us, wretched sinners who were his enemies rather than

friends (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-11). Add to this all the wonderful blessings that God gives to us on a daily basis (Matt. 5:45; James 1:17), just as he did with David. When we remember all that God does for us with unselfish and humble hearts, we will be motivated to detest the sin that offends our Savior and repent.

This is true because our humble and honest remembrance of God's great love, mercy, and numerous blessings on our behalf will bring about godly sorrow, which leads to repentance (2 Cor. 7:9-10). In Spielberg's movie, the older Ryan breaks down in tears as he approaches Captain Miller's grave, no doubt due to remembering the great sacrifice that man and others made for him. Likewise, the psalm David wrote after Nathan rebuked him for his sins is filled with remorse and anguish as he remembers the salvation God offers to him (Ps. 51:8, 12, 14). Unlike worldly grief, which leads to spiritual death in hell (2 Cor. 7:10; Rom. 6:23; Rev. 21:8) and is selfishly based only on sorrow over the punishment one receives here on earth for one's sins, godly grief is based on anguish that one committed the sin in the first place due to the great offense it gives to our Savior and King. Only this will truly lead us to repent and thus be saved (2 Cor. 7:10). Do we grieve over our sins, and if so, what kind of sorrow is it? We should examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5) so we will know if we need godly sorrow in our lives.

Furthermore, godly sorrow will motivate one to ***"bear fruits worthy of repentance"*** (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). The thief who has

worldly sorrow only over the fact that he got caught and is now being punished will steal again at the first opportunity. However, the thief who has godly sorrow over the fact that he stole in the first place because it grieved his Creator and Savior will now detest the very idea of stealing and thus be motivated to never do it again. As a result of the repentance brought on by their godly sorrow, the Corinthians became very diligent in their strong desire to fearfully and zealously serve God and clear themselves of the guilt of their sins which they now indignantly detested (2 Cor. 7:10-11). Likewise, we never read of David committing adultery or murder again after his repentance over his wrongdoing with Bathsheba and Uriah. In other words, their actions proved that they had truly repented. When we commit to repentance, do our actions prove it? Or are we deceiving ourselves?

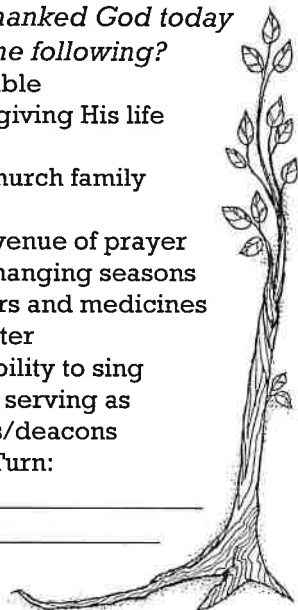
Too many today have no idea what true repentance means, or how it is produced. This contributes to the lack of true conversion to Christ among many, the lack of zealous commitment to his cause among more, and the growing immorality and apostasy within the brotherhood. We must go out of our way to teach potential converts the true meaning of repentance and how it is produced before we baptize them, while reminding new converts and ourselves of how true repentance is manifested within our lives. With God's help, doing so will have a highly positive impact on our own spiritual well-being and that of the church overall.

Jon Mitchell

God gave you a gift of
86,400
 seconds today. Have
 you used one to say
THANK YOU?

*Have you thanked God today
 for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:



This bulletin is published by the
WELLSBURG CHURCH OF CHRIST

92 Rose Cottage Lane
 Wellsburg, WV 26070
 304-737-1422

<http://www.truthandright.org>



Like us on
FACEBOOK under
 Wellsburg church
 of Christ!

Follow us on TWITTER
 @wellsburgchurch



View us on YOUTUBE:
[https://www.youtube.com/
 user/wellsburgchurch](https://www.youtube.com/user/wellsburgchurch)

Paul in Ephesus

I E K X I B Y Y X J W E D A F X N P M P
 N K D T F A E N S X H I P P H V P M N N
 E H U T R P O R B Y H U Z O N G X X D D
 N G N U L T W E L V E Q X L R H Z F I E
 F L V K W I T H D R E W O L H L X P S G
 W Y X W M Z M S L J P Y K O R O F H C T
 X X C R Z E T Y R A N N U S B T Q S I W
 D A B G Y D C A D E C T L T C M H M P A
 F R E A S O N I N G S B I U L E X K L U
 G D O F N C B X I I L B L B R G U W E P
 A N O G M M R X W A S G Y B E L D Z S F
 N R X Q E K P T K S E P Q O P B A Y P E
 K T Z K B L S A G N U S N R E X E A I C
 E Z Z G E W Q V H H I N U N N O T T R U
 Q M X W S W Z K G G N I N B T I T Y I A
 C A K X V E B L X U G M M A A I K K T I
 C G R B E H H S E H E A R I N G G W G P
 L N Q R D C E D D Z R J D K C T G X T V
 Q U U S I Z U H O T O N G U E S R P G M
 X P V T R T K O Q E P Y M J W Z P A V E
 U O C R Q Y U W Q Y Z E V W D V Q O N H

DIRECTIONS: Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

Acts 19:1, And it happened that while _____ was at Corinth,
 Acts 19:1, ...came to Ephesus. There he found some _____.
 Acts 19:2, "Did you receive the Holy _____ when you believed?"
 Acts 19:3, And he said, "Into what then were you _____?"
 Acts 19:4, ...the baptism of _____, telling the people to believe...
 Acts 19:5, On _____ this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 Acts 19:6, ...came on them, and they began speaking in _____
 Acts 19:7, There were about _____ men in all.
 Acts 19:8, and for three months spoke boldly, _____ and persuading
 Acts 19:9, But when some became _____ and continued in unbelief,
 Acts 19:9, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he _____
 Acts 19:9, ...reasoning daily in the hall of _____.