

In search of...

Truth & Right

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Repentance or Perish

As children grow, parents teach them to say, "I'm sorry." Yet, children learn to say their sorry before they understand what it really means. Some children intentionally do something they know is wrong, then immediately say, "I'm sorry" thinking that those magical words are the cure all for the deed they just did. All children have a bad habit of this at one point in their lives. Yet, somehow we must instill in our children an appreciation and understanding of what it means to be genuinely and godly sorrowful for wrongful deeds done. Yet, this is also something that adults need to practice.

Repentance is one of the most basic biblical concepts and an integral part of the salvation process. Yet, the subject is often ignored due to its simplicity and because it is by far, the hardest of all God's commands. It is the most difficult thing in life because repenting has a convicting, pride

swallowing effect. It is interesting that when Christians neglect the worship services for a time and then slowly start coming back around, they think that this is repentance. This is not repentance. Repentance involves more than restitution of the sin which makes it the hardest step in the plan of salvation. In fact, repenting is the hardest thing we will ever do because we turn away from that which is most comfortable and sinful and begin looking toward God.

Before one can determine what Biblical repentance is, we must define what Biblical repentance is not. It is not simply being sorrowful or regretful about something because Judas was sorry for betraying Christ, but he never changed his heart (Matthew 27:3-5). Repentance is not being fearful you will get caught for Felix was fearful and trembled about the judgment to come, but never repented (Acts 24:25). It is not godly sorrow because the apostle Paul said,

"godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation . . ." (2 Corinthians 7:10). It also is not some type of positive change in your life because many make positive changes to their lives and still will not repent of sins. It is not confession nor is it being in attendance at the worship assemblies (Hebrews 10:24-25). Repentance is not just stopping the sin. Now, it is good when one stops doing wrong, but that sin is still charged against one in heaven until he or she repents of their wrong. Repentance is not feeling the Gospel prick your heart for those on the day of Pentecost experienced this, but still had not repented (Acts 2:36-38).

The word repentance means remorse, to regret accompanied by a true change of the heart toward God. It means to know and therefore, repent after knowledge. It signifies a change of mind after understanding what was wrong. It is a change in will brought about by a deep sense of godly sorrow, knowing that our sins have offended God, which leads to a reformation of life, turning away from sin and evil and turning unto God and his righteousness while restoring things as much as possible to the way they were before the sin. Repentance is a must for salvation and therefore, one cannot be saved without it!

We read in the Bible how Peter denied the Lord in which he later repented (John 21:15-17). It is hard to face the facts that people that love the Lord are still those who

can deny him and need to repent. Paul shows us that he repented when he realized he was wrong about God's Word (Acts 9:28). Therefore, if, "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation . . ." (2 Corinthians 7:10), it is a divine requirement which Jesus confirmed saying, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Repentance is mandatory for all mankind and because no one wants to perish meaning, to spiritually die. Yet, repentance is necessary because everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Therefore, one repents so they can move toward salvation because that is what God requires.

Now, Those who are Christians, know this: you can fall from grace! It is possible to be an erring child of God which requires repenting and we do the erring child of God no good, when they need to repent and we just accept them with open arms not holding them accountable for their sins. The Church cripples itself each time this happens. The apostle Peter assured Simon that his Christian heart was not right in the sight of God and needed to repent of his wickedness (Acts 8:20-24). Congregations can be lukewarm (Revelation 3:15), lose their love with Christ (Revelation 2:5), be spiritually dead (Revelation 3:1), accept false doctrine (Revelation 2:14), permit sin who have been seduced by it (Revelation 2:20-21) and still not even know themselves that they are lost!

It is terrible when this fact is presented because people are quick to justify and rationalize themselves while attempting to remove their guilt that involves themselves. But you know, king Saul tried this by seeking to defend himself by his excuses (1 Samuel 15:13-22). It did not work. The fact is, the goodness of God should motivate an individual to repent (Romans 2:4). Why? Because it is a command from God and the coming judgment should motivate individuals to repent (Acts 17:30). One should be motivated to repent if they are at risk of eternal spiritual death (Revelation 2:5).

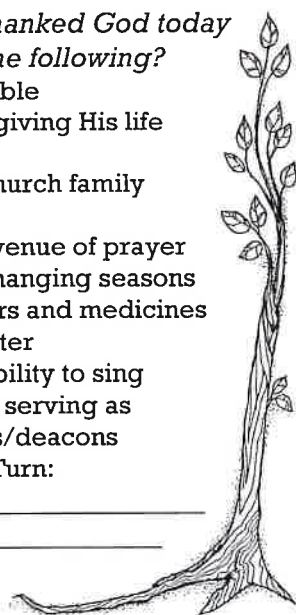
Those who are shamed, those who have done wrong, those who need repenting should think very seriously about doing so. The Scriptures tell us many will die and live eternally in torment (Colossians 3:5-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Revelation 21:8). Is it finally time for you to repent in your life? The story of the rich man and Lazarus emphasizes the importance of repentance (Luke 16:19-31). The tortured unrighteous, who had died physically, strongly desired to return to their physical family in order to convince them to repent. If the unrighteous dead could speak to us today, they without a doubt, would tell us first and foremost to repent. And once you are there, no person in this world or out has the authority to remove one from it! Once you are there, it is permanent! Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Lk. 13:3). Do what is right.

Robert Notgrass

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:



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Withdraw from Sin

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

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

- 1 Cor. 5:1, It is actually reported that there is sexual _____ among you,
 1 Cor. 5:2, Let him who has done this be _____ from among you.
 1 Cor. 5:4, When you are _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus...
 1 Cor. 5:5, you are to _____ this man to Satan...
 1 Cor. 5:5, ...for the _____ of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved
 1 Cor. 5:6, Your _____ is not good. Do you not know...
 1 Cor. 5:6, ...that a little _____ ... the whole lump?
 1 Cor. 5:7, For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been _____.
 1 Cor. 5:9, I wrote to you in my letter not to _____ with sexually immoral...
 1 Cor. 5:10, ...or the greedy and swindlers, or _____,
 1 Cor. 5:11, ...with anyone who bears the name of _____ if he is guilty...
 1 Cor. 5:12, For what have I to do with judging _____?