

Biblical Perspectives From God's Word

The Foundation of Repentance

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I. Introductory Remarks

2 Timothy 2:19-21 *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." ²⁰ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. ²¹ Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*

As we can see from this passage, repentance is an important essential when it comes to fulfilling our destiny. It allows us to be sanctified and useful for the Master so that we can be prepared for every good work.

In this lesson we will see how we as Christians must deal with the sin in our lives. It's important for us to understand that becoming a Christian does not necessarily nullify the old nature, but rather introduces a new nature which wars against the old.

- **What does sin mean?** There are three primary words for "sin" in the Hebrew language. Each of them implies the existence of a standard of righteousness established by God.
 - (1) *hata'* means to miss the **mark**," or to "fall short of the divine standard."
 - (2) *Pesa'* is usually rendered by "**rebellion**" or "transgression," and indicates revolt against the standard.
 - (3) *'Awon*, translated by "**iniquity**" or "guilt," is a "twisting of the standard or deviation from it."

Sin not only blinds us and leaves the good beyond our grasp, but sin also twists our will, moving us to desire and to choose what we know is wrong.

II. Understanding Repentance

What is repentance and how does it affect our Christianity? This is an important question we must all come to grips with.

Matthew 9:13 *"But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

Repentance is a total turning from your past and coming under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, which involves a total surrender of your heart to Jesus Christ and all He stands for with a conscientious desire to obey the Word of God.

Hebrews 5:8-9 *though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. {9} And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,*

• **New Testament Definitions of Repentance**

True **repentance** involves a change of mind and purpose and life, to which remission of sin is promised, which consists of the Following:

1. A true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness
2. An apprehension of God's mercy in Christ
3. An actual hatred of sin and turning from it to God; (Psalm 119:128; Job 42:5, 6; 2 Corinthian 7:10)
4. A persistent endeavor after a holy life in a walking with God in the way of His commandments.
5. True repentance is conscious of guilt, of pollution, and of helplessness. (Psalm 51:4, 9), (Psalm 51:5,7,10), (Psalm 51:11;109:21,22).
6. True repentance will be just what God has always seen in you to be and declares you to be in Him.

Matthew 18:3-4 *and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. {4} "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

Acts 3:19-20 *"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, {20} "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,*

Luke 15:7 *"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.*

III. The Process of **Transformation** and True Repentance

1. Repentance Begins with God's Intervention in our Lives.

Jesus, the Author & Finisher of our faith comes to seek and save those who are lost. His desire is to not only seek us out and to save us from ourselves, but to deliver us from the grips of Satan and his domain and then to translate us into His kingdom.

Colossians 1:13-14 (NLT) *For he has rescued us from the one who rules in the kingdom of darkness, and he has brought us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.
14 God has purchased our freedom with his blood and has forgiven all our sins.*

- **It is through His goodness that He begins this process in our lives.**

Romans 2:4 *Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?*

2. True Repentance Requires Obedience on our Part.

Paul said, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision when sharing his vision and calling with King Agrippa.

Acts 26:18-19 *'to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'* ¹⁹ ***"Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,***

As we respond in true repentance through obedience when God comes knocking on our door, we are saved and born again and He becomes our savior because of obedience.

Hebrews 5:9 *And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,*

Genuine conversion begins the process of transformation in our lives, which delivers us from the power of Satan's domain into God's everlasting Kingdom. As a result of this conversion we are born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. (See 1 Peter 1:23)

3. The Seed of God's Word Must Be Firmly Planted in our Hearts.

In Matthew's Gospel we have the Parable of the Sower in Chapter 13, which illustrates to us the importance of the seed being planted in our hearts. In this parable Jesus talks about four kinds of soil that the seed of God's Word falls

upon. It is the good ground that we are concerned with.

Matthew 13:23 "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

What is the key to hearing the word and understanding it? Hear with faith.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

To hear the Word with Faith is to come into agreement with God's Word. You are immediately accepting His word as truth. You agree with it and embrace it rather than question and filter it through old paradigms of understanding.

IV. The Problem of Sin in the Christian.

1. All Christians Sin.

No matter who you are, even if you think you are the most perfect person that ever came forth, you still have sin in your life. All Christians sin! No Christian can have day-by-day victory over sin and live the happy, joyful, triumphant life, until he or she faces the true facts about sin in their own nature, sin in his own life, what sin will do and what do about it. Remember what it says in *Jeremiah 17:9*, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. **If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

According to Scripture, we now, present tense, have sin. All of us have sin in our hearts and lives. If we say we have not, we are simply deceiving ourselves. To say that we have no sin is not the truth.

- **Every Christian Has Two Natures.**

To better understand why Christians sin, we must understand the difference in the two natures we as Christian have. We have an old nature and a new nature. We are to put on the new nature while putting off the old nature.

Ephesians 4:22-24 ...that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness.

What we have to understand is that these two natures war with each other and the sinful nature sometimes wins out over the new nature and thus we fall into the trap of sinful behavior as Christians. We see this struggle in Paul's writings to the Romans.

- The **two-fold** nature is seen in Paul's writings.

Romans 7:15-20 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

When we were born into this world, we were born with a sinful nature that opposes the law of God. But when we are born again by the Spirit of God, we received a new divine nature that hates sin.

Paul talks about his struggle he went through on a daily basis with his sin nature. Paul had the mind or heart to serve the law of God, but he had the flesh and fleshly nature to continually pull him towards sin

- This two-fold nature is seen in **John's** writings as well.

1 John 3:6-9 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

Does this mean that anybody whoever sins proves he has never known God or been saved? No! This means that the new nature, the born again nature, the new heart of the converted person cannot sin. The old man or nature sins, but

the new man does not sin and cannot sin. Let's keep in mind that the new man's nature is to bring the old nature unto subjection and submission.

- **We Stand In The Righteousness of God.**

Romans 4:3 *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

Hebrews 10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

The above Scripture is a great Scripture. On one hand it shows how we have already been perfected because of the sin offering by Jesus on the cross and on the other hand it shows that our sin nature is still being sanctified. God sees us as perfected because we are standing in His righteousness and not our own.

Hebrews 4:15-16 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Romans 6:1-2 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?*

We have seen that the Christian sins because he stills struggles with the old nature, but a true Christian has a new nature that is convicting Him of the sin in his or her life and moving them forward in God's grace and victory over sin.

Even though God's grace covers us this does not give us a license to continue in known sin. When we continue in sin without any conviction coming from the new nature, which is born after God, we should question ourselves as to whether the new man even exists. If it doesn't, then we have not known God.

V. Repentance and Honest Confession.

For the Children of Israel it wasn't enough for the blood sacrifice of a lamb to be made. It had to be applied to the door of their homes. That was their responsibility in the process.

Exodus 12:7 *And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.*

Just as the Children of Israel had as responsibility to apply the blood, we too, have a responsibility to apply the Blood. This is not something Christ does for us. When we learn to apply the blood we find immediate forgiveness and cleansing and the way to complete restoration of fellowship with God. Therefore, let's look at how Jesus expects us to apply to blood to the doorposts of our hearts.

1. We Must Sincerely **Confess** & **Forsake** Our Sins.

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Any Christian who honestly confesses his sin to God has it instantly forgiven and cleansed. The key is to confess honestly and sincerely before God.

2 Corinthians 7:10 *For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. (Verses 11-12 also).*

1 Corinthians 11:31 *For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.*

The very moment we confess our sin, and thus judge the sin and take sides with God against sin, that sin is blotted out, both forgiven and cleansed. Thus, upon simple confession of sin, the child of God has peace with God about the sin, and he has victory over the sin. So we see that through confession we are applying the blood of Christ to our sins. But our confession must be honest and sincere.

VI. Concluding Remarks.

Yes it is true, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Just make sure it is honest confession, a confession that judges the sin honestly, that repents of the sin and turns from it, and that does anything that properly can be done to undo the sin. Anything less than that is not an honest confession of sin.

Do not fail to have the forgiveness and cleansing that you need by dealing lightly or dishonestly with sin. This is how the blood is truly applied to the doorpost of our hearts.

May God bless you and may His blood completely cleanse you of all your sin. This is the first step in receiving your complete victory over the sin that so easily ensnares you.