

Living in Repentance

Text : **Psalms 51: 1-19**

- A. Have you ever been in a situation where you knew you needed to turn but couldn't ? It's a frustrating experience.** S#1.
S#2.
1. Most of us who travel have been on an interstate highway and missed our exit.
 2. Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi is in a Mexican Jail for just such a problem.
- B. Thankfully, God always allows us to change our mind and turn around.** S#3.
1. This process of changing direction is known as repentance.
 2. Def. : **Repent** : heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins. (Strong's)
- C. Repentance has always been part of God's call to mankind.**
1. **Psalms 51** ... Defines repentance as a condition of mind.
 2. One can be forced to change his actions without his repenting, e.g., Jonah. **Chp 4**
 3. God commissioned prophets to call Israel to repentance :
 - a. **Ezek. 14:6** – "Repent and turn away from your idols and turn your face away from all your abominations." S#4.
 - b. **Isa. 1:27** – Zion will be redeemed with justice and her repentant ones with righteousness.
 4. John the baptizer preached repentance to Israel. (*representative of mankind*)
Matt. 3:2 – "Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand"
 5. **Matt. 4:17** ... Jesus preached the very same message to Israel .. the Jews.
- D. Repentance remains a part of the Christian message.**
1. On the limited commission the disciples preached ...
Mark 6: 12 – They went out and preached that men must repent.
 2. As part of response to the first sermon Peter preached repentance.
Acts 2:38 – ... Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; (*Forgiveness linked to repentance*)
 3. Paul preached repentance ... (*Standing before king Agrippa*)
 - a. **Acts 26:20** – (*Paul*) kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. S#5.
 - b. He told the elders at Ephesus that repentance was essential.
Acts 20:20-21 ... I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,
21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. S#6.

- E. Thus, as the Hebrew writer said (**Heb. 6:1**), Repentance is a founding principle of Christianity ... “**elementary teaching**”.

Since repentance is so much of a central and reoccurring theme in God’s message to mankind, it behooves us to spend a few minutes examining it.

I. Repentance is a command of God.

S#7.

A. The preaching of repentance was part of the great commission.

1. **Luke 24: 46-47** and He (*Jesus*) said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

S#8.

2. Notice that **repentance** is “for” the forgiveness of sins. It is a prerequisite.

- * 3. God will forgive people FOR their sins, but not forgive them IN their sins.

B. Repentance has always been preached as a command of God.

S#9.

1. Remember **Acts. 26: 20** .. repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate...
2. Addressing the Greek scholars at the Areopagus Paul told them :
 - a. **Acts 17: 30-31** Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, ³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”
 - b. Repentance is linked to forgiveness so essential before judgment.

S#10.

C. God whom wants all men to be saved (**I Tm 2**) wants every person to repent.

1. One’s failure to repent will result in his perishing. (*eternal banishment*)

II Pet. 3: 9 – The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

2. **Rom. 2: 4-5** ... Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? ⁵ But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

S#11.

II. What does it mean to repent ?**S#12.****A. Definition : “METANOEO”****S#13.**

To change one's life based on a complete change of attitude and thought concerning sin and righteousness.

B. Repentance involves regret for transgressions.**S#14.**

1. **II Cor. 7:9-10** I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. ¹⁰ For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death. ¹¹ For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you

S#15.

2. Sorrow for sin is different than feeling guilty.

- a. The Apostle Paul knew he was forgiven, but regretted his past sins. **I Tm 1:13-15**
- b. One who repents “hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.” **Jude 23**

C. Repentance brings about a change of activity. (*not just of mind*)**S#16.**

1. **Acts 26:20** ... Preached .. do **deeds** appropriate to repentance (Rm 13:14 provision)
2. One who repents of pornography burns his magazines & puts controls on electronics
3. **Rev. 2: 5** – Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and **repent and do the deeds you did at first**; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.
 - a. Over time Christians lose their zeal and begin to drift ... make excuses.
 - b. Luke warm (*average*) has never been acceptable to God. (cf. **Rev. 3: 16**)

III. Observe some results of repentance.**S#17.****A. Repentance starts the process which frees one from sin.****S#18.**

II Tim. 2: 24-26 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

S#19.

1. Learning truth leads one to seek more of God's truth.
2. Truth motivates one to escape the grasp of sin ... the grasp of Satan.

3. The repentance produced by truth fosters obedience to God.

B. Repentance makes forgiveness possible.

S#20.

1. **Acts 3:19** – Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

* “**SO THAT**” indicates a prerequisite.

2. **Jer. 26:3** – ‘Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.’

S#21.

a. “**that I may**” specifies a prerequisite

b. God’s repentance of judgment depends on man’s repentance.

Note : God’s repentance is not of sin, but change of mind about intent.

C. Repentance leads to restoration of relationship with God

S#22.

1. Repentance leads to spiritual resurrection ... restoration of life.

Acts 11: 18 – When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”

2. It is clearly stated, repentance leading to salvation.

II Cor. 7:10 – For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

S#23.

D. Clearly one must renounce sin before he can be forgiven of sin.

S#24.

God will forgive one OF his sins, but will not forgive him IN his sins.

IV. Repentance must be an ongoing state of heart. (An attitude, A lifestyle)

S#25.

A. There is never a time when a living person stops sinning ... even Christians.

S#26.

1. **I John 1:6-8** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; ⁷ but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

S#27.

a. The Christian must strive to walk (to live) in the light. .. i.e., to not sin.

b. BUT, try as we might to live holy lives, we do sin.

c. Therefore, the Christian must constantly be repenting in order to be forgiven.

2. Even the inspired Apostles could not completely overcome sin.
 - a. **Gal. 2:11** .. Paul vs Peter “**I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.**”
 - b. **Rom. 7:14ff** ... Paul shared his struggles with reoccurring sin.
3. Those converted by the Apostles sinned.
 - a. Simon the magician sinned in his heart. (*Motive for wanting to buy ability.*)
Acts 8: 22 – **Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.**
 - b. The epistles were written to deal with sin in the churches. (Rom., Cor., etc.)

B. The point for us to remember is that repentance cannot be a one-time act. S#28.

- * 1. **YOU** will have a life-long struggle against sin **so you must constantly be repenting.**
2. We must continually be regretting, rejecting, repenting of our sins.

C. Repentance is an attitude toward sin, a condition of heart.

1. One who will not repent CANNOT be forgiven.
2. Paul mourned over those who remained unrepentant.
II Cor. 12:21 – **I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced.** S#29.

D. By nature, the Christian will regret his sins, but must not wallow in guilt. S#30.

1. **II Cor. 7:9-11a** (ESV) **yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. ¹¹ For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment!** S#31.
2. **Acts 2: 37** ... Godly grief pierced their hearts and produced repentance.
3. In our text David exemplifies the repentant heart a Christian must have.
Psa. 51: 2-4 **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.** S#32.
- a. No excuses for his sins.
- b. Full acceptance of guilt and punishment. *Call for mercy.*

CONCLUSION :**A. Our challenge is to develop within ourselves a repentant heart.****S#33.**

1. Our love for God should cause us to seek to please Him ... never disappoint.
2. We must realize that our sin breaks the heart of God.

B. May we take these admonitions from God's holy word to heart :

1. **Ezek. 18: 30-32** Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord God. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. ³¹ Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves^{#35} a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord God. "Therefore, repent and live."
2. **Psalms 51: 10-12** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. **S#36.**

C. Have you rejected sin and turned toward God ?**S#37.**

1. We urge you to do so right now.
 - a. Are you walking toward God or away from Him ?
 - b. You and you alone must choose ... **No middle ground.**
2. The choice must be made while you live and before the Lord returns.
 - a. There is no promise of even one more breath.
 - b. **Heb. 9: 27** – ... **it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,**
3. **I urge you ... Choose God now !**

INVITATION :**You will create joy in Heaven ...****S#38.**

1. **Luke 15:7** – I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
2. **Come to Him now !!** **S#39.**

Lesson Text :**Psalms # 51**

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. **2** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. **3** For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. **4** Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. **6** Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. **7** Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. **8** Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. **9** Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. **11** Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. **12** Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. **13** *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; *Then* my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. **15** O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise. **16** For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. **19** *Then* You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.