Repentance: A Practical Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

- Repentance is not something that is supposed to just happen once in our life.
- But the reality is that all of us mess up. Even after we become Christians, we do things from time to time that are wrong.
- There will be times that all of us will need to repent and to change.

1 The Mind of Repentance

1 John 1:8; 2 Samuel 12:7

- Repentance that is genuine has to start with the recognition of our spiritual condition.
- If we are going to truly repent in a way that leads to salvation, then we need to start by seeing ourselves in our sin the way God sees us.
- We will never start turning our attention toward our Father, our Heavenly Father, until somehow circumstances have brought us to the point where we finally realize how bad this thing is that I've been doing.
- Sometimes what it takes is a confrontation. And not necessarily a hostile confrontation, but some kind of a confrontation from someone who helps us to see what we're doing that's wrong.
- Yes, they are often against individuals around us, but ultimately, our sin is an affront against God.

2 A Tearing of the Heart: Broken and Contrite

Joel 2:12–13; Psalm 51:17; 2 Corinthians 7:10

- What has to happen is there has to be a tearing of the heart.
- Return to me with all your heart. And with fasting, weeping and mourning. And rend your heart and not your garments.
- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- Godly sorrow produces repentance without regret, leading to salvation. But the sorrow of the world produces death.
- True repentance is never presumptuous. Yes, one sinned against must forgive. And God has promised to forgive. But a sinner who is truly penitent never takes it for granted.

3 The Words We Use When We Repent

Hosea 14:1–2; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9

- Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to him, Take away all my iniquity and receive us graciously.

- Repentance involves words, so we need to think about the words that we use when we repent.
- True repentance, what it does is it leads to confession. It leads to an acknowledgement of the fact that we have done this wrong thing.
- One thing that I understand about it is that confession from a biblical perspective is unambiguous. It is forthright.
- The second thing that I learned from Scripture about confession is that confession is specific.
- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

4 Fruit in Keeping With Repentance

Luke 3:7–14

- When somebody really repents, it's apparent that's happened. That when someone repents, there is fruit that is seen from that.
- Therefore, bear fruit in keeping with repentance.
- When someone truly repents, he stops doing the thing that's wrong. He changes that. It's evident there's a difference in how he acts and how he behaves.
- Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.
- That's necessary, not because God requires it, but because the heart of the truly repentant moves him to want to do it.

THE CHALLENGE

Focus on you. And ask yourself, am I what I need to be in the presence of my God?

MY NOTES