The Beauty of Biblical Confession & Repentance

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Our lives can take many twists and turns, and sometimes we can find ourselves headlong into the grip of sin. But God, who is rich in His loving mercy, calls us back to Himself through confession and repentance. We all confess and repent on a regular basis because sin consistently dogs us. Thankfully, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9 This study will help you clear a path toward true biblical confession and repentance. We all need to have a better understanding of confession and repentance in order to maintain a right relationship with God and others. This study will make that way clear. Study with your heart open to God’s Word and your eyes lifted up toward Him in prayer.

Blessings to you! Brad Hilgeman[[1]](#endnote-1)

INTRODUCTION

This study is about repentance; together we are going to learn the biblical key to repentance. However, without understanding the act of confession first, we will not be able to fully understand true biblical repentance. Because of this the first part of our study is loaded with a lesson on confession, we will then move into a study in 2 Corinthians seven on repentance. Our goal in this study is to see what 2 Corinthians chapter 7 has to say about repentance, and how we should apply biblical repentance to our lives after we have confessed and repented from our sin.

Follow the steps below in order to use this study to apply this truth to your life and execute it in a specific way.

1. In order to benefit the most from this study, highlight or underline areas in this study that are particularly helpful to you.
   1. Use a separate sheet of paper or electronically evaluate or assess your life in the light of the insights presented in this reading. This will help you to inventory your life and really make a spiritual assessment in the area that you are struggling. Be honest and open, trust God to help you and your counselor.
2. Begin to consider how you can begin to practice this biblical guideline in your husband & wife relationship, parent child, family, work, school, or with friends or people you know.
   1. As you are doing this study begin to write out a plan. Specifically find and explain in your own words a creative way to live out what you have just learned. Take one conflict at a time, think how your lack of remorse, and repentance, is adding to the conflict and plan how you must change.
   2. Things to remember.

What do you need to change from the heart, and how will you go about making those changes to the inner man? Change must be at the heart level, and true repentance always bears fruit in the person who sincerely repents. This study will help you with questions like” In what ways can I keep from going back into the unbiblical practices that I have found myself in? Where have I lacked biblical wisdom specifically? How can I please God with my life and bring Him the maximum glory He deserves, and how will that goal enhance my life in Christ and with others?

* Summarizing the first part of the assignment: #1 Evaluate or assess your life on paper. #2 Write out a plan. Be sure to answer all the questions in your paper.

1. Confession and admittance of guilt is an important aspect of repentance and is not the same as repentance as you will learn.
   1. No one escapes wrong attitudes or actions toward others during conflicts. Therefore, it's important to confess unacceptable behavior, in order for God to bring reconciliation to those who were wronged. Wrongs include thoughts and/or behavior. God is pleased when we confess to Him and others what we have done. He aids us in this process when we see our sin like He sees our sin.

Example: I saw my sin “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,” like God saw it and I turned in repentance this way.

(When I speak of seeing sin like God see’s sin, I am referring to how God exposes sin according to His Word in one’s life and defines that sin.) Be aware that attitudes, words, tones, and behavior communicate what is in your heart, where your sin emanated from. Do not trivialize your sin, sin is a transgression against God.

*Matthew 15:18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”*

*Psa 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.*

*1Jn 3:4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.*

Sin is a dismissal and disregard for God’s authoritative Law, sin at its core is a dethronement of God in preference for enthroning self. You become Lord of your life, you determine, without biblical insight or counsel what you want in life. Please be careful to acknowledge the theology of sin in the Bible and understand how it works in all of our lives. Sinning is part of our fallenness as sinners, acknowledging sin and seeing sin like God sees it is so important to say the least. Be careful to understand the theology of sin, what the Bible has to say about sin. A study on this subject would be very, very helpful as you grow in your understanding of confession and repentance.

* Is there a possibility that you have trivialized sin in your life? How have you done this in your life?
  1. True repentance is an issue of the heart and is accomplished privately in the heart before God. Your private life before God is what shapes the outer life you live. You must begin to understand that your confession must come from your heart, the place that you must guard the most.

*Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

**Help with Confession**

God desires for us to forsake our sin not hide or ignore our sin. *Proverbs 28:13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.* God of course knows our heart, and knows if we have been tempted to just be compliant, with no true thought of forsaking our sin, admitting or confessing our sin. It could be that you are struggling with being exposed, or you have been exposed but have become stubborn or secretively within your heart non-compliant. Perhaps you have not contemplated how important confession of sin is before the Lord and others. Perhaps none of this applies to you, you are just tired of the path that sin has taken you and you realize that you must change, you want to change!

God uses His Word to help us to examine our true heart motives in many ways, His delight is in a pure heart, a blameless heart. *Proverbs 11:20 Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD, but those of blameless ways are his delight.* He desires truth in the inward heart of man. *Psalm 51:6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.* So we could say that in order to delight the Lord, we must fully, wholly and honestly confess, with no motive, vailed intentions or secretive non-compliance within our hearts. True confession that leads to true repentance does not have ulterior motives. True repentance is more than just compliance. “Compliance is different than repentance. However, what makes this so difficult is that compliance and repentance share a lot of common outward expressions. For example,”[[2]](#endnote-2)

1. Compliance and repentance admit wrong.
2. Compliance and repentance agree that something must be done.
3. Compliance and repentance listen and are respectful.
4. Compliance and repentance thank you for being willing to serve them.
5. Compliance and repentance make behavior changes.

Although these common outward expressions are close relatives of repentance, they may not represent a true heart of confession and repentance. Our hearts desire when we repent is to conform not comply. What I mean by conform, is to conform to the image of Christ by become more like Him as a result of my confession and repentance from sin. Romans 8:29 The goal is to please God and bring Him ultimate glory by becoming like His Son in my hearts motives and desires. The outward expression of this transformation is conforming into Christlikeness. This is a far cry from compliance, or an inward defiance, or a vailed non-cooperation attitude within our spirit. It is very different than just “confessing” to get it off of our chest or lessen the pain of sin or finally be done with it. We must be very careful to examine our hearts before God and protect ourselves from this attitude of the heart. We must be open and honest in our confession with no ulterior motive, no sense of protecting ourselves but rather humility and genuineness before the Lord and others.

Confession and repentance is not the same thing. Confession is the beginning act of working toward repentance from sin, toward the gospel driven act of repentance from sin. We identify our sin by confession, we agree with God about our sin in our confession, but then we move toward God and repent and turn from our sin thus asking God, and being granted by God forgiveness of our sins. So what about confession leading toward repentance?

**Confession Is Normal and So Is Gods Compassion**

Confession is a normal and continuous part of the believer’s life that maintains a right relationship before God and others. We stand before God at all times, He is ever present, a “refuge and strength” in our confession, and is always willing to hear our prayers, especially our prayers of confession.

*Hebrews 4:13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

*Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

Psalm 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

Our Heavenly Father loves us as His children; He forgives and shows grace, mercy, and compassion, He deals with us tenderly when we truly confess our sin. You can have complete faith in His tender understanding love and care. Have faith in God’s mercy and love as you confess to Him and others. Remind yourself of the benefits of being a child of God, rehearse in your heart his abounding steadfast love, rejoice that He does not give us what we deserve, but rather brings us up from the pit and renews our strength in times of need. Be encouraged and have hope as you read the following verses.

Psalm 86:15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Psalm 103:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. 6 The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

**Saying The Same Thing That God Says About Our Sin**

The word from which the English word “confess” is derived from means: “to say the same thing” or “to say the same thing as another” and then “agree, admit or acknowledge.” *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.* This is a strong and hopeful promise of confession that leads to forgiveness. When one confesses in court to a crime they are admitting to the crime and they are agreeing with those who have witnessed against them that they are guilty of said crime. Simply, to confess is “to say the same thing” about your sin as God has said about your sin. We should pray and confess to God, (say the same thing as God would say about our sin), as modeled in Daniel 9:4*, I” prayed to the LORD my God and made confession”* This is what we see when reading Daniel 9:3-19, a prayer of confession, a prayer saying the same thing about our sin as God would say. “When a Christian confesses his sins, he acknowledges that God is right in what He has written in the Scriptures about the wrong he has thought, said or done. Thus, he says the same thing that God says about his sin.[[3]](#endnote-3)” We all have the tendency to lessen our sin, vail our sin, excuse our sin, color our sin or what have you, but God sees and describes our sin in a raw and uncut fashion. This is where we need to be in confessing our sin.

**Guilt And Shame**

Guilt and shame are byproducts of sinning; we see this in the shame of nakedness in Genesis 3 with Adam and Eve, the fallen countenance of Cain in Genesis 4. But Gods promise to forgive and remove our guilt is real, the shame may last as a result of the consequence of our sin but we do not have to live in shame, we live according to His promises, if we confess our sins we have no guilt or shame before God. It is however important to know that there may be lingering effects of our sin before people, as well as deep regret within. God’s promise to forgive is true and comprehensive, and not just hollow words. “God’s promises are not just nice-sounding words. Mercy came in person and took action on your behalf. When it comes to guilt, shame and regret, it is so easy to bog down in an inner morass of confusion and misery. But the gifts of God for the people of God take you by the hand. They speak and taste of mercies much more real than your inner psychological experience.”[[4]](#endnote-4) Don’t allow yourself to be captive to the consequences of your sin, acknowledge it, grow in it, ask God for strength in it and where appropriate help others in your life understand it, but more importantly rejoice and be glad that you are no slave to it. In time God will comfort you even as you regret the actions or responses brought on by past sin. You will learn humility and you will learn to trust in God who holds no sins against anyone who confesses, repents and forsakes their sin. Restore where you can restore, be willingly culpable where there is culpability, love and pray for those who are unwilling to forgive, and remember these promises.

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Isaiah 38:17 Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but in love you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction, for you have cast all my sins behind your back.

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

This is how God responds to our sin after we confess and repent of our sin, why should we hold anyone else to a “higher standard”.

In this repentance study you will see that “Repentance is seeing your sin as God see’s and describes it in the Bible, and being so repulsed by that sin that you have a change of heart and mind about that sin, turning from it, turning to God for mercy from pending judgment, never to return to it again.” I am simply pointing out that our sin is against God first, our sin is defined by God first and our confession is toward God first.

**Confession, Confidence and Courage**

Psalm 51 is a great place to see the process of confession; please read the entire chapter and then find out the background of this confession.

Write down what you found out in other references on why David made this great confession.

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In confessing sin we definitely need to be reminded of God’s tender loving mercy, God promises mercy in confession. This constant reminder will encourage confidence in Gods undying merciful love toward you; consider also that He has the power to forgive and willingness to completely blot out our sins. What mercy! What underserved mercy! *1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.* No one else may have confidence in you. You may have completely lost confidence in yourself, but God does, God in Christ does have confidence in you. *Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.* The path that you are now on will prove this, I promise!

Gods great and liberating mercy in *Psalm 51.* The passage starts with crying out for mercy, *verse 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.* Perhaps now is the time for you to pray and cry out for mercy. Pray now, right now, “God have mercy on me”, believe that he will, again, even if man does not show compassion and mercy toward you God does. Remember what God says now as you pray. *Psalm 86:5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you. Psalm 145:9 The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* Pray these verses back to the Lord reminding Him and yourself of this rich, rich mercy*. Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us.* Now let’s examine closer Gods rich mercy in Psalm 51.

* Mercifully as we own our sin, acknowledge our sin, see our sin as God sees our sin, He washes us clean from our sin as we openly and honestly confess our sin. Sin that is first and foremost against Him, sin that deserves his just judgement. *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, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.*
* Mercifully He purges us, cleanses us, washes us from our sin, as well as delights in our truthful open honest confession. He wants us to be confident that He alone can purge us from our sin, wash us clean and restore us to a right relationship with him. Notice that this confession is truthful in the “inward being”, in your very soul. Full and truthful confession brings about a schooling of wisdom within “the secret heart”, the kind of teaching that only true confession can bring about to the very depths of your soul by God and before God. A confession and a wisdom to rid ourselves of sin, as well as learn our lesson and live in purity and truth, this is all a part of the beauty of confession. *5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*
* Mercifully, true confession restores the joy of salvation with gladness, a sense of cleansing, restoration and worship in the inner man, the “inward being”, “the secret heart”, like no other means can produce, accomplish or achieved. It is whole and it is wholesome, it is complete and comprehensive, so much so that it “restores the soul” to a right relationship with God and others. What “joy and gladness” we have when we are right with God and with others, when we have confessed our sins. The loneliness of not being fully restored to God’s presence, the loneliness of not walking in the Spirit is restored with the joy of salvation. *8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that 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 right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. 14 Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.* The additional icing on the cake is that we now learn from our lesson and we advance into teaching other “*transgressors your ways”,* teaching sinners Gods way and they “return” to God as we have. This is the genuine comprehensive nature of true confession, when we actually and deliberately are led in our hearts now, because of our confession, to reach out to others, to show them the folly of their way, to become an instrument of Gods mercy, to forgive and “*teach transgressors your ways”.* Here is a key to great healing of broken relationships, when those who witness your true confession and repentance, now see how you behave totally and completely different than before. With a zeal to restore as well as be restored. WOW! What great mercy!!
* Mercifully we can now worship God and “declare your praise”, whereas we were not able to before, because of the estrangement brought about by sin, we are now forgiven, our restoration is complete, completed in adoration and praise, “*according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy”.* God’s great act of restoration through confession and repentance, with a pure brokenness and contrite heart, brings about the highest and most desired effect from God, pure worship! It is a restoration that surpasses our understanding so much so, that the Psalmist has to ask God to form in his heart and open his lips, the right expression of praise to our God. *“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.”*

*15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. 18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; 19 then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.* Because God’s forgiveness is so gracious and so complete, we can only conclude that it is a reflection of God’s purist love demonstrated in His most wonderful mercy, and then expressed in its most desired effect, worship. Now do you see the depths of the benefit of true confession?

**Help In Our Confession**

“The beauty of the gospel is that our confession is always linked with God’s promise of good. Guilt and regret make you miserable, unhappy, in dire need of mercy. Mercy is not something anyone deserves; it is something undeserved that someone else gives. What are God’s promises to you? Here are a few specifics to take to heart. Stop and think over each promise. What does it mean that this is true? What would it mean for you to truly believe and trust this? How does this promise change the meaning of your failures and sins? Say these promises to yourself. Think about them. Say them aloud. Ask God to make them so. Turn to him on the basis of these promises.[[5]](#endnote-5)2

*I will never leave you or forsake you*. Imagine—you will never be abandoned. He will not walk away. What does it mean to you that this is so?

*The Lord bless you and keep you*. Imagine—God promises to do you pure good. He promises to keep you in his care, to watch over you. He will never betray your trust.

*The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you*. Imagine—the Lord promises to turn a beaming face toward you. He will treat you with true kindness. Grace means undeserved kindness, and God is willingly gracious.

*The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace*. Imagine—he promises to never turn away from you. He gives peace. He does not get disgusted and give up. He does not leave you in trouble, turmoil and confusion. What would it mean for you to know true peace?

*The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin*. Turn to him honestly, and he will be all these things to you. Imagine—here is someone who is faithful, who will never betray you. Imagine—here is someone whose love is steadfast and unwavering. Imagine—the very person who should condemn you is choosing to be merciful and forgiving. Because he is all these things, you can turn to him honestly.

*For your name’s sake, pardon my iniquity, for it is very great*. Imagine—God does all this because of *who he is*. Who he is and what he does are far greater than what you have done. In effect, you are asking, “O God, when you think about me and what I have done, think of yourself and what you have done. When you take notice of my wrongs, remember your own mercies.” Think long and hard about that. Talk it out with God. Your hope comes from someone completely outside of you! No matter what you have done wrong—“my iniquity is very great”—you may cry out for an even greater mercy.

*All the promises of God are YES in Jesus Christ*. Jesus fulfills all these promises and more. Your hope centers on a Person, not a feeling, not an idea, not something you do. Jesus is and does what God promises. Because Jesus loved you to the uttermost, you have true hope, not “I hope so …” or “Maybe …” or “If only.…” Jesus went to his death on a cross for your wrongs, not for his own. The innocent died for the guilty. He personally took your shame and guilt onto himself. He died so you would not die for your sins. He is alive forever, so you will live in him and with him. He personally fulfills and embodies each and every one of the promises you have been considering. Because of Jesus’ death for you and because of his resurrection to life, you can bring your darkest sins into his bright light. Ask God for mercy because in Jesus he has shown that what he promises comes true. What he said he would do, he *did*. What he says he does, he *does*. What he says he will do, he *will do*. You can ask today. You can ask every day. Ask now.”[[6]](#endnote-6)

* Here is a suggested prayer you may pray.

Dear Lord, I acknowledge my sin, and I acknowledge and confess here my specific sin. I also ask you would give me strength to follow through with others by asking their forgiveness if someone else has been affected by my sin. I confess that I am struggling in the aftermath of my sin, to trust you to forgive, to remove the guilt and shame. Cause me to believe your Word, that you do grant forgiveness, that you do wash me clean, I ask you to forgive me now Lord. My hearts confession is open and honest and I desire to be in a right standing before you and others. I ask for mercy and need grace in this time of need, comfort my heart by your Spirit, by your Word, and lead me to paths of righteousness for your namesake, deliver me from evil and strengthen me according to your Word, make me a person of your Word and create in me a new and clean heart Lord, renew a right spirit within me, grant to me the joy of your salvation and grant me faith to fully and wholly believe your promise of forgiveness and restoration. Thank you Father, thank you for Jesus who made forgiveness possible for me. In the name of the Lord Jesus I pray, Amen!

**Repentance According to 2 Corinthians 7**

* Let’s begin our study by reading 2 Corinthians 7:8-11 slowly and carefully.

*2Co 7:8-11 For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it--though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. 9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.*

A little background. Paul heard of sin in the Corinthian church and wrote a letter to confront that sin, referred to in 1Co 5:9. He did not regret sending the letter, even though it caused them sorrow, because he knew that sorrow over their sin would move them to repentance leading to obedience. Notice that “godly grief” leads to TRUE repentance.

*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! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.*

* Now let’s carefully see what biblical repentance looked like in the Corinth Christians lives and should be reflected in ours as well.

**GODLY SORROW**

1. **You must come to repentance with Godly sorrow.**
   1. Repentance Is in a Godly Manner.

*2 Cor 7: 8 For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it--though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. 9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.*

* 1. The Apostle Paul is rejoicing that the letter he wrote them, brought them to a place of repentance.

The letter exposed continuous sin in the church that was being ignored. Read the first six chapters of First Corinthians, and list the sin that was being ignored, excused, or accepted.

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* 1. Paul confronts the church about wicked sin in their congregation. As a result, he teaches them to practice godly repentance in the next letter of Second Corinthians.

1. God is the Author of repentance (Acts 5:31) and the one who graciously leads men to repentance (Rom. 2:4).
   1. Repentance is seeing your sin as God see’s and describes it in the Bible, and being so repulsed by that sin that you have a change of heart and mind about that sin, turning from it, turning to God for mercy from pending judgment, never to return to it again. This type of repentance is fundamental in restoring relationships.

**TRUE REPENTANCE MANIFESTED**

1. **How does true repentance manifest itself?**

*10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.*

* 1. First, it is having a right attitude toward God and sin.
     1. Being forced to repent because you are caught is worldly sorrow; repenting because you realize you have sinned against a holy God is godly sorrow.
     2. Answer this question with an honest and open heart: would you repent if you were never caught or exposed? Circle one…. Yes / No.

You may be deceiving yourself into thinking that you would eventually come to repentance and confess your sin. If so, you need to be honest in your heart, and admit that you would not confess if never caught or exposed. Explain why you would not come to repentance.

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* + 1. If you confessed on your own, explain why you did.

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* + 1. This contrite attitude toward sin against God is demonstrated in the Psalms.

*Psa 41:4 As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you!"*

*Psa 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.*

* 1. Secondly, it produces fruit.
     1. What are the fruits of repentance?

John the Baptist stated:

*Mat 3:8-9 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.*

2 Cor. 7:9-11 clarifies the fruits produced.

7:9 Your sorrow led to repentance. The letter produced a sorrow in the Corinthian believers that led them to repent of their sins. Remember repentance refers to the desire to turn from sin, see your sin like God sees your sin, and restore your relationship to God.

7:10 Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation. Godly sorrow refers to sorrow that is according to the will of God and produced by the Holy Spirit – godly sorrow PRODUCES FRUIT.

That fruit includes Christ’s complete Lordship over your life from now on, there is a recognizable change in Christ’s authority over your life. When you truly repent from sin you stop living life independently from God’s authority and instead identify and live by His authority, and people notice it.

* Have you demonstrated this kind of fruit in your life? In what ways? Be specific please.
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  1. True repentance cannot occur apart from a genuine sorrow over one’s sin.

Paul was saying that repentance belongs to the realm or sphere of salvation. Repentance is at the very heart of and also proves one’s salvation. Unbelievers repent of their sin initially when they are saved; believers continue to walk with an attitude, or walk of repentance the rest of the days of their lives.

The walk of daily repentance is a way of life for believers. They repent of their sins continually to maintain the joy and blessing of their relationship toward God.

There is an open attitude about sin that continually drives them to repentance. This open attitude has to do with having a sensitive awareness of sin, and immediately repenting when any known sin is in one’s life. A tenderness and a very, very sensitive and easily pricked conscience that drives you to repent when you know you have sinned.

*Psa 51:10-12 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.*

* 1. Paul wrote that the sorrow of the world produces death. Human sorrow is unsanctified remorse and has no redemptive capability; it has no action toward the God who has been sinned against. It is nothing more than the wounded pride of getting caught in a sin and having one’s lusts go unfulfilled.

That kind of sorrow leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, self-pity, and hopelessness. Do you have these kind of emotions? Can you see why? What do your emotions look like now? Are you “emotionless?”

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* 1. What true heart repentance looks like according to II Corinthians 7.

Verse eleven provides a look at how genuine repentance will manifest itself in one’s attitudes. I have numbered them within the verse for clarity.

*11 For see what (1 )earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what (2) eagerness to clear yourselves, what (3) indignation, what (4) fear, what (5) longing, what (6) zeal, what(7) punishment! (8) At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.*

**THE EIGHT ATTRIBUTES OF REPENTANCE**

*What does godly sorrow look like and do you reflect these traits?*

In this section of our study, please use a separate sheet of paper and explain how you are modeling in your life these eight attributes of sincere repentance. Try to be specific.

* 1. *What earnestness* (concern) *…this godly grief has produced in you,*

The initial reaction of true repentance is to eagerly and aggressively pursue righteousness. This is an attitude that ends indifference to sin and complacency about evil and deception.

* 1. *What eagerness to clear yourselves*

This refers to a desire to clear one’s testimony of the stigma that accompanies sin. The repentant sinner restores the trust and confidence of others by making his genuine repentance known.

* 1. *What indignation* (wrath and anger)

Repentance leads to anger over one’s sin and displeasure at the shame it has brought on the Lord’s name and His people.

* 1. *What fear,*

This is reverence toward God, who is the One most offended by sin. Repentance leads to a healthy fear of the One who chastens and judges sin.

* 1. *What longing* (strong and vigorous, intense) *desire,*

Desire means a yearning or a longing for, and refers to the desire of the repentant sinner to restore the relationship with God and the one who was sinned against.

* 1. *What zeal* (an eager, obsessive, fiery response to the things of God)*,*

This is another attitude of repentance: I am driven toward God with great zeal, now. I abhor my sin, I don’t want anything to do with it, and I won’t turn back to that sin!

* 1. *What punishment* (vindication, exoneration)*!*

This refers to the desire to see justice done, even though you are the one who is going to be judged.

The repentant sinner no longer tries to protect himself; he wants to see the sin avenged no matter what it might cost him, so he can be clear in this matter.

The essence of repentance is an aggressive pursuit of holiness.

* 1. *At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.*

The word “clear” means *pure* or *holy*. You now demonstrate the integrity of true repentance by purity and a holy lifestyle before God and man.

* 1. Engage your heart in understanding biblical repentance. Use these questions to prompt your heart as you write. Your counselor will ask you these questions later.
     1. What characterizes the repentant person described in these verses?
     2. How do you think that you are not following this biblical guideline. In what ways or what manner specifically?
     3. How have your sins contributed to the conflict you find yourself in, because you have not practiced true biblical repentance?
     4. Can you now explain what you understand about this truth from God’s Word?

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

There is much confusion in regards to biblical repentance and its everyday implications upon our lives. You can now see that repentance means more than just saying I am sorry. You now come to an honest understanding of your own personal sin, and recognize the liability and consequence of unconfessed and unrepented sin. You are now ready to forsake sin, remove or sever it from your life. Matthew 5:29-30.[[7]](#endnote-7)

God has provided a community of believers within the local church that He wants to use to help you grow in your understanding of repentance. They can provide the comfort, care and prayer that we all need as we walk through life. We see this in the many “one another” commands in Scripture, here are just a few.

*Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

*James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

When you share your sin with others or listen to others confess sin, it’s important to talk about what repentance looks like.

Here are some helpful questions to ask:

* Do you see your sin as God sees your sin? Godly sorrow or worldly sorrow. 2 Cor 7:10
* Is there a sense of concealment of sin or is it all out in the open? Proverbs 28:13
* Is there a true sense of confession and true forsaking of sin? 2 Corinthians 7:1, 1 John 1:9
* Can you see the eight attributes of repentance being modeled or reproduced? (pg. 12)
* Is there a general sense of humility and regret within this person? 2 Cor 7:9-11
* Is there a distinct heart direction change, a heart attitude change, a definite course of life change? Are you picking this up by laying the eight beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-11 against their lives, such as humility, hunger for righteousness, purity, peacemaking etc.
* Are they placing barriers and guarding their hearts to prevent sinning again? Proverbs 4:23,

These are great questions to ask ourselves in our everyday living of life, what we have called the “walk of repentance.” It is very important to keep in mind what repentance is and perhaps even write the definition down on a card or in a place of prominence as a reminder.

What is repentance? Repentance is seeing your sin as God see’s and describes it in the Bible, and being so repulsed by that sin that you have a change of heart and mind about that sin, turning from it, turning to God for mercy, never to return again.

As John the Baptist said you demonstrate transformation by the fruit of true repentance. Christian, I encourage you to demonstrate a walk of repentance each day, having an open attitude about your sin, dealing with it in a true and biblical manner.

Someone Said: “If we put off repentance another day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.”

Write a summary of your thoughts concerning this lesson below.

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**HOW FORGIVENESS BRINGS COMFORT, RELIEF   
AND BLESSINGS WHEN WE TRULY REPENT.**

The sense in which we are addressing forgiveness here is by the personal benefit that God gives as a result of living before Him knowing we are forgiven, as well as being a forgiving kind of person. Jesus addresses this in the model prayer.

*Matthew 6:9 Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

“The Lord’s Prayer commands us to pray, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,” right after it instructs us to pray for daily bread. Practicing forgiveness is something we must do daily in the same way we ask for the daily provision of food. It is a part of everyday life, not something reserved for life’s “big” sins and events.”[[8]](#endnote-8) Living life with a clear conscience before God and man is truly a key component to living and maintaining a spiritual and mentally healthy life before God and man. It is and must be a daily part of our walk in life, our walk of repentance. And where forgiveness is employed and repentance is lived out, it transforms as well as brings glory to God. “Forgiveness humbly sought, and humbly given, profoundly expresses the glory of God.”**[[9]](#endnote-9)**

**Conviction & The Holy Spirit**

When we sin the Holy Spirit brings about conviction of that sin. *John 16:8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:* The thing that we have done has offended God and guilt and shame, along with many other dynamics of our hearts response to sinning takes shape, we feel the pain and discomfort of our sin. *Psalm 32:3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.* Here the Psalmist is describing the intensity of not dealing with his sin. The heaviness of guilty feelings are real because guilt is a byproduct of sin, we are in fact guilty before God and He is the only one who can relieve us of our guilt. When we do not deal with sin, concealing our sin, or not confessing and forsaking our sin, the pressure builds upon our hearts. . *Proverbs 28:13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.*

**Confession & Redemptive Purposes**

Confessing to God and forsaking our sin brings about a spiritual and mentally healthy life before God and man because we no longer experience the discomfort of guilt over our sin. The pressure is gone because God has forgiven and we are clean or cleansed from our sin. *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.* Forgiveness removes the powerful and overwhelming forces of guilt and shame and produces a peace, a peace between God and man deeply embedded in the heart because of God’s promise to forgive. Confession is a healthy and necessary way to maintain a right standing before both God and man. *Psalm 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

“When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, He does so to bring us to repentance and, ultimately, to bring us to reconciliation with God, to forgiveness, to healing, and to cleansing. In other words, when the Spirit of God convicts us of sin, His entire purpose and entire motive is redemptive.”[[10]](#endnote-10) The only hope for a fresh relationship with God and man is within the gospel and its redemptive purposes. That redemptive purpose includes full forgiveness through Jesus’ promise to you and me through His blood, the kind of forgiveness that He “lavished upon us” because He loves us. *Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.*

“An important feature of Christ’s sacrifice was to provide forgiveness of sin; and this work was accomplished so completely that God does not even remember the sins covered by the blood of Christ. (Ps 103:11, Is 38:17, Mic 7:19, Heb 10:17) Sin incurs a debt, which requires forgiveness. It enslaves in a bondage, which requires redemption. And it causes an alienation, which requires reconciliation. All three results of sin must be dealt with to “put away sin” (Heb 9:26).” [[11]](#endnote-11) That complete redemptive act upon the cross continues to provide complete cleansing from sin today as you confess and repent of your sin toward God. You have “real forgiveness” when you truly repent from sin. “But that real forgiveness requires real repentance and real faith, and without real repentance and real faith there is no real forgiveness to real guilt before God. Our guilt should drive us to search for the way of forgiveness and reconciliation that God provides for His people; it should drive us to the cross, where Christ paid the price for our transgressions.”[[12]](#endnote-12)

**Mercy & Reconciliation**

Mercy is what we need from both God and man, forgiveness provides that as well as the clearing of our conscience, the removal of guilt so that we no longer suffer under the pressure of our sin. We are forgiven and restored to favor before God and man, and reconciliation takes place.We should be willing to demonstrate that same kind of mercy, the same that we needed in forgiveness from God by confessing our sins to each other, praying for one another as a daily obligation to each other. *James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.* We should also be willing to forgive as we desire to be forgiven by others with a tenderheartedness that only God in Christ could model for us. *Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.* It’s a wonderful, refreshing life giving, energizing feeling to receive mercy!

**Joy & Fruit**

Acknowledging and confessing sin is part of repenting and the wonderful fruit of repentance is God forgiving, and lifting the burden of sin from our hearts, the joyful result of forgiveness is that we are now cleansed and free from guilt and shame, restored to fellowship with our Great God. “There ought to be joy over the forgiveness of sins. While the process itself may be a solemn and at times tearful experience, the outcome always ought to be joyful.”[[13]](#endnote-13)

*Psalm 32:1 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah 5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

“The point of David’s testimony is that blessedness belongs to the man whose sin God does not see. I guarantee you that God can see through a rug. But God cannot see through the blood of atonement. When sin is covered with the blood, there is absolute pardon.”[[14]](#endnote-14)

Now that you have completed this study on repentance take heart in the promise of forgiveness.

* *God forgives you completely.*
* *God forgives you immediately after you confess.*
* *God forgives you without asking for guarantees that you will never repeat the wrong you did again.*
* *God restores you and that brings blessings, favor and benefits something we all desperately need.*

*Psalm 86:5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.*

*Psalm 103:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. 6 The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. 13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. 14 For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. 17 But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children, 18 to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. 19 The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. 20 Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! 21 Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! 22 Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!*

Write below from this passage ALL the benefits God gives, and there are many, that you should not “forget”.

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* Now that you are forgiven …..REJOICE!

**SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY.**

**EVALUATING TRUE REPENTANCE VS PENANCE**

Is there an alternative for repentance? You may already know the answer to that question. True repentance is an issue of the heart and is accomplished privately inwardly in the heart before God. There are however fruits of repentance that we as believers are able to observe outwardly, one of which is that without hesitation the person now seeks God, desires God, pursues God with all their inner being. *Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’*

Martyn Lloyd-Jones brings this thought to our attention like this. “That is the differences between repentance and remorse. The man who has not repented, but who is only experiencing remorse, when he realizes he has done something wrong, avoids God... The man who has not been dealt with by the Spirit of God and has not been convinced and convicted, tries to get away from God, to avoid Him at all costs. He does not think, he does not read the Bible, he does not pray; he does everything he can not to think about these things. But the extraordinary thing about the man who is convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit is that though he knows he has sinned against God, it is God he wants... He wants to be with God — that is the peculiar paradox of repentance, wanting the one I have offended! I put it therefore in this form. The impenitent avoids God: the penitent knows that no one but God can really satisfy.”[[15]](#endnote-15)

Penance is defined as: “The suffering, labor or pain to which a person voluntarily subjects himself, or which is imposed on him by authority as a punishment for his faults, or as an expression of penitence; such as fasting, …*(extreme criticism of oneself),* ... Penance is one of the seven sacraments of the Romish church.” [[16]](#endnote-16) Another dictionary defines penance as: “An act of self-abasement, mortification, or devotion performed to show sorrow or repentance for sin. Something (as a hardship or penalty) resembling an act of penance (as in compensating for an offense)” [[17]](#endnote-17) It has also been defined as: “A religious attitude prompting men to attempt to pay for their sins through good works and suffering.” [[18]](#endnote-18)

Penance is the notion that you must, or can do acts or deeds in an effort to gain favor from God, or from others, or hide from God's omnipresence, or camouflage true culpability as seen in the first act of Adam and Eve after they sinned. *“….* their effort to cover themselves illustrates the futile attempts of the race to save itself from the eternal effects of sin by works of morality, penance and the like.”[[19]](#endnote-19)

Sometimes a person will try to divert from true repentance, and avoid consequences of sin by confessing their wrong doing in a sorrowful manner. This person may show regret, distress, and may be deeply troubled by the sin that has beset them. It may be a feeling of deep sorrow that displays itself in trying to do some sort of act, manifest some sort of emotional display, demonstrate inordinate grief or even self-denunciation. Sometimes they resort to self-inflicted pain or abusing of their bodies as a sign that they are truly “sorry” for their wrongdoing. Man is ever trying to replace true repentance with penance by performing all sorts of deeds to prove his sorrow.

“Most people define repentance as a kind of sorrow, but this is not exactly St. Paul’s view here.(2 Corinthians 7) There is a kind of sorrow, he intimates, which issues in repentance, but repentance itself is not so much an emotional as a spiritual change. The sorrow which ends in it is a blessed experience; the sorrow which does not end in it is the most tragic waste of which human nature is capable. The Corinthians, we are told, were made sorry, or grieved, according to God. Their sorrow had respect to Him: when the Apostle’s letter pricked their hearts, they became conscious of that which they had forgotten-God’s relation to them, and His judgment on their conduct. It is this element which makes any sorrow "godly," and without this, sorrow does not look towards repentance at all. All sins sooner or later bring the sense of loss with them; but the sense of loss is not repentance. It is not repentance when we discover that our sin has found us out, and has put the things we most coveted beyond our reach. It is not repentance when the man who has sown his wild oats is compelled in bitterness of Soul to reap what he has sown. It is not a sorrow according to God when our sin is summed up for us in the pain it inflicts upon ourselves - in our own loss, our own defeat, our own humiliation, our own exposure, our own unavailing regret. These are not healing, but embittering. The sorrow according to God is that in which the sinner is conscious of his sin in relation to the Holy One, and feels that its inmost soul of pain and guilt is this, that he has fallen away from the grace and friendship of God. He has wounded a love to which he is dearer than he is to himself: to know this is really to grieve, and that not with a self-consuming, but with a healing, hopeful sorrow.” [[20]](#endnote-20)

Penance, or we might call it false repentance, is worldly sorrow that has at its heart control, the person is seeking to control the situation with little or no negative effect or result. The desire to control the outcome of his soon confrontation with sins consequences provides a personal sense of security, albeit false security. We are all prone to try to control our world, the outcomes of our world. These selfish desires plague us and blind us; we may not even know or believe that we are trying to control the circumstances around us because our hearts are so self-deceived. *Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 “I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.”* Worldly sorrow is pure regret that has no thought of producing true repentance. On the surface level it is well camouflaged and takes great discernment to uncover. At the root level, or heart level, it is a dangerous form of self-deception. A person’s heart may be so deceived that they do not realize they are trying to work their way to a right relationship with God and the other person.

Control is only one aspect of penance, actually using penance or worldly sorrow as a strategy to gain something from a broken relationship with God or people, to protect ourselves and maintain control and power over the situation is the greater manifestation of pride. “God will look down on me better if I….., people will see me in a better light if I…..”, it is a belief that by controlling the circumstances things are going to work out better with God and with people. By putting the trouble or problems behind them with little or no consequence, without humiliating or embarrassing themselves, without confronting sin and dealing with their sin as God would have them deal with their sin, they will feel better about themselves and the circumstances. Brokenness and the humility associated with brokenness over sin is not on their radar, it’s the total opposite of *Psalm 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.* And *Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

There is no difference between the lost person who is trying to appease God by a work unto salvation and the believer who is trying to appease God by a work unto divine favor. It may even require the person to do something against their own will to try to control the final outcome of a situation, not out of desires toward God, but by the selfish desire to save face, to save themselves from humiliation or embarrassment. “There is no virtue in the unwilling. Cain brought his sacrifice, but grudgingly; his worship was rather a task than an offering, rather penance than a sacrifice; he did God’s will, but against his own.”[[21]](#endnote-21) This only intensifies the outcome of the situation in which they are trying to control making it doubly worse. Pride blinds so deeply and shapes a person’s heart so insidiously that they actually think that they can appease God on their own terms by acts of penance, again making it that much worse. This worldly sorrow defends itself, setting up a defense about the matter of being wrong, about being fully culpable for sin, perhaps a hidden kind or even a more open kind of justification for their sin.

“Impenitence after sinning is a more determined form of sin, than sinning in and of itself. For it is a tacit defense and justification of sin. If after transgression the person acknowledges that he has transgressed, and asks forgiveness for so doing, he evinces that he does not excuse his act, condemns it, and mourns over it. But if after transgression the person makes no acknowledgement, and asks no forgiveness, he is really repeating and intensifying his sin. He virtually justifies himself in his act of rebellion against authority, and thus aggravates the original fault. It is for this reason that impenitence for sin is more dreadful than sin itself.”[[22]](#endnote-22)

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS OF WORLDLY SORROW?**

The person may be attempting to water down the problem, wallowing in self-pity, may be attempting to get rid of the problem or is unwilling to deal directly with the issue because of guilt so they defend their behavior. They may excuses or rationalizes their actions. If they wouldn’t have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank); if that place would have treated me better. They may become angry at the mess they have created, angry at others, angry at self, anger that God is offended, even angry that they sinned, but not angry at the sin itself and has no longing or yearning for true restoration of relationships being restored. They may even fear the consequences and others rather than an offended God.

We see this same kind of false repentance or worldly sorrow demonstrated in: Esau Gen. 27; Heb. 12:16, Pharaoh Ex. 9:27; 10:16-17, Saul 1 Sam. 15:24-30, The Nation of Israel Judges, Jeremiah, Joel 2, Malachi 1:7-9 and many other passages as well as in Judas Mt. 27:3-5.

When someone has worldly sorrow usually their first defense is to protect self, typically this manifests itself in being manipulative, not considering the true effects of their sin but rather minimizing and diminishing it. God and the person they offended are only players in their manipulative mindset. Sometimes they speak of the offence with lightheartedness, joking at it, laughing it off, perhaps even trying to pull the other party over to their side by shaming them, trying to get others to feel sorry for them by spotlighting the great regret they have for the sin but not taking the full blame for their sin. You may not be like this outwardly but that does not mean that inwardly, secretly your thoughts are not along these lines. A person who is demonstrating penance rather than repentance is not thinking about the severity of sinning against God, that God is offended at sin and that God requires only one path to restoration for sin. We as sinners are always trying to diminish in some way our culpability our blameworthiness just as Adam and Eve did when they blame shifted and put the spotlight on the serpent, on the women, on anything other than themselves. Gen 3 That is what we naturally do as sinners, rather than humbly confessing out sin and dealing with the consequences of our sin we camouflage our sin.

**“THE AIM OF GENUINE CONFESSION IS NOT TO AVOID  
THE EARTHLY CONSEQUENCES OF OUR SIN.”**

“The aim of genuine confession is not to avoid the earthly consequences of our sin. Read David’s prayer of repentance in Psalm 51 and take note of this. David’s confession focused entirely on sin’s *guilt*, not its consequences. When he prayed the prayer recorded in that Psalm, David had already learned that he would suffer horrible consequences for his sin. His own children would dishonor him. His wives would be taken from him and made to commit adultery in broad daylight. The child he had conceived in his adultery with Bathsheba would die, bringing him almost unbearable grief. God had already told him through the mouth of Nathan that all these things would certainly occur. David knew they were coming when he wrote Psalm 51. Yet that great prayer of repentance includes no mention of sin’s consequences. David made no complaint against the severity of God’s discipline. His outrage in that Psalm was reserved for his own sin. That’s because it was the *sin* that most disturbed David, not the *chastisement*.”*[[23]](#endnote-23)*

Taking ownership of our sin and not taking it lightly is an attitude of the heart that we must have before God and others. “We are ever prone to regard sin lightly, to gloss over its hideousness, to make excuses for it. But the more we study and ponder God’s abhorrence of sin and His frightful vengeance upon it, the more likely are we also to realize the heinousness of sin.” [[24]](#endnote-24) David took ownership of his sin and wrote. *Psalm 51:3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.* Remember in our study that you are to be so repulsed by sin that you turn and never go back to it. We see it for what it is, we abhor it like God does and we take ownership of our sin before God and others. It is, “*Against you, you only, have I sinned”,* we sin against God first and it to God we must turn with a humble heart and willingness to repent of our sin.

Spurgeon wrote: “When we are sure that we are forgiven, then we abhor iniquity; and I suppose that when faith grows into full assurance, so that we are certain beyond a doubt that the blood of Jesus has washed us whiter than snow, it is then that repentance reaches to its greatest height. Repentance grows as faith grows. Do not make any mistake about it; repentance is not a thing of days and weeks, a temporary penance to be over as fast as possible! No; it is the grace of a lifetime, like faith itself.”[[25]](#endnote-25)

Matthew Henry wrote: “The Christian religion is the religion of sinners, of such as have sinned, and in whom sin in some measure still dwells. The Christian life is a life of continued repentance, humiliation for and mortification of sin, of continual faith in, thankfulness for, and love to the Redeemer, and hopeful, joyful expectation of a day of glorious redemption, in which the believer shall be fully and finally acquitted, and sin abolished forever.” [[26]](#endnote-26)

*E. M. Bounds* wrote: “Of course, the prayer of repentance is acceptable to God. He delights in hearing the cries of penitent sinners. But repentance involves not only sorrow for sin, but the turning away from wrong-doing, and the learning to do well. A repentance which does not produce a change in character and conduct, is a mere sham, which should deceive nobody. Old things must pass away, all things must become new.”

There is no bargaining with God, setting limits or refusal to submit to Him or any hint of a personal agenda when repentance is doing a work in the heart of an individual, the focus is on God because of my sin, what He thinks about my sin. The fruit of repentance is demonstrated in the right focus. When the focus is not on self but on God it always leads to repentance. This is demonstrated in: David 2 Sam. 12; Ps. 32, 51, Prodigal Son Luke 15:11-32, Apostle Peter Luke 22:54-62, Thief on the Cross Luke 23:39-43. “The repentance that Christ requires of His people consists in a settled refusal to set any limit to the claims which He may make on their lives.” [[27]](#endnote-27)

Repentance is a spiritual medicine made up of six special ingredients: 1. Sight of sin, 2. Sorrow for sin, 3. Confession of sin, 4. Shame for sin, 5. Hatred for sin, 6. Turning from sin. *Thomas Watson*

**HOW DO WE SEE TRUE REPENTANCE MANIFESTED IN PEOPLE?**

*2 Corinthians 7:11 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! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.*

* This is manifested by: [[28]](#endnote-28)

1. The truth of God and the reality of sin sets in. Psalm 51
2. The purity of God contrasted with their sin sets in. Hab 1:13
3. The command to repent overwhelms them. Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 17:30; Rev. 2:16
4. The weight of conviction overpowers their will. Psalm 38:17; 51:17
5. The willingness for true confession takes shape in them. Hos. 5:15; 1 John 1:9
6. The will is broken and the determination to please God takes meaningful root in their life.
7. Emotions of contrition are real and overwhelming. Isaiah 57:15
8. The resolve to choose God’s way and seek God’s agenda takes form in:

A change of mind 2 Cor. 7:10; Ps. 51

A change of desires 1 Thess. 1:9

A change of will Ps. 51

To lead a sanctified life Eph. 2:8-10

* Turning from an attitude of penitence toward repentance enlightens us and makes us aware of ourselves before God and others. We might ask ourselves or others:

Do (they we) understand how (they we) have sinned?

Do (they we) understand how to deal with sin?

Have (they we) ever experienced brokenness, godly sorrow and true humility?

Is the sin truly overwhelming them?

Do (they we) get the “big picture”, do (they we) understand how sin effects God, others and themselves?

Do (they we) have a genuine desire to totally separate from sin? Radical amputation Matthew 5:29-30.

NOTES:

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**SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY   
RADICAL AMPUTATION [[29]](#endnote-29)**

* Please underline or highlight key thoughts throughout this study. Take notes and discuss in our next session. You will also find questions throughout this study that will need to be answered as well.

Matthew 5:27-30

The Doctrine Of Sanctification

Let your goodness be the only fault they can discover in you. Like Daniel, compel them to say of you, *"We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."* Seek to be "useful" as well as consistent. C. H. Spurgeon

I. Sanctification is a matter of growing out of old ways while growing into new ones.

A. Ways of thinking and doing were brought into the new life from before conversion.

B. One who is truly regenerated is changing without (in putting off old patterns and putting on new ones) because he is changing within.

* *Do you sense within yourself a change within?*

II. The word sanctified means "set apart" or "separate."

A. Negatively one is set apart from sin, positively, for God.

B. He is separated from others, unique; special to God.

* *As a believer you have been set apart, made holy, special to God, do you fully grasp this truth?*

III. We are already separated, completely sanctified, in Christ.

A. His whole righteous life is attributed to us--we are circumcised with Christ, crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, risen with Christ, seated in the heavenlies with Christ.

1. But we do not have all this in daily living in this life.

2. That is why sanctification is taking place--to enable us, day by day, to become in actuality more of what we are reckoned to be in Christ.

B. We must become in ourselves (but not by ourselves) what we already are in Christ.

1. This is quite distinct from self-actualization (becoming what you may be in and by yourself); sanctification is becoming in yourself (by the Spirit's work) what you already are counted to be in Christ.

2. Sanctification is not teaching human self-sufficiency by self-help methods).

* *This is a profound truth, do you find yourself “trying” too hard, too much of yourself without acknowledging that it is Christ in you that accomplishes the work. Determination is not enough, what we already are in Chris is your new identity. Where or what do you find your identity in?*

IV. How, then, does sanctification take place?

A. Patterns of thinking and living change as one is "renewed by the Spirit" (Who is working) in his "mind" (Eph. 4:23).

1. The human side of this renewal (vs. 22,24).

2. The Spirit's work in renewing God's image by renewing the mind (Col. 3:9,10; Rom. 12:1,2).

B. In Ephesians 4:23, there are two key words ("mind" and "renewed") and one key concept to understand (the Spirit changes us by changing our minds).

1. The word mind refers specifically to the logical, intellectual and reasoning functions in a human being, as well as to the opinions, viewpoints, beliefs and attitudes that are formed by exercising these capacities. The spirit is at work challenging and changing our thinking, making our minds (attitudes, beliefs) conform to the mind of Christ, Romans 12:1,2.

2. The word renewed means to make new again in quality, not new in time. The old, worn out, sinful ways of thinking must be replaced by fresh, biblical ones. Rom. 12:2 - Col. 3:10.

3. The transformation of the patterns of living into which the members of the body have been habituated, which must be "put off" and replaced by new ones (Eph. 4; Col. 3), takes place as the direct result of the Spirit's work in changing and influencing the person's mind.

C. Because the Spirit works in the inner person, to change one's thinking and attitudes, *we* will focus on instilling by repeated teaching that;

1. *Sets* the standards for Christian behavior

2. Point to specific principles and practices of Christian living.

3. Will take the time to show how (practically) these can be integrated into the particular situation that each person faces.

4. Since the Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures, we can count on Him (in His own way and time) to bless the faithful ministry of the Word. He does so, especially, when we adopt His practices set forth there.

* *We can say then that: “The Holy Spirit of God, Takes The Holy Word of God, And Makes Me Like The Holy Son Of God”. Are you exposing yourself enough to God’s Word in specific ways in order for this to occur? Can you write down in specific ways that you are accomplishing this?*
* In this chapter I wish, therefore, to take up one important biblical dynamic (that I have not discussed elsewhere) for "putting off" sinful practices.

V. Radical Amputation

A. The words of Jesus on this subject are found in *Matthew 5:27-30*

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

*(To emphasize the seriousness of allowing one's life to be captured by sensuality, Jesus used the symbolic language of mutilating the body to overcome lust. His vivid description of purging the body of eyes or hand indicates how vital it is to overcome lust in one's heart. Only a change of heart can banish this sin from one's life.) [[30]](#endnote-30)*

B. A vital part of sanctification is putting off old ways.

1. Speaking figuratively (there is no call to actually maim the body), Jesus calls on us to incapacitate ourselves so that we find it extremely difficult to sin again as we did in the past. That is the gist of the passage.

* *……if we would overcome, if we would have victory over sin, we must load our consciences, our minds, and our hearts with the heinousness and peril of sin. We must come to the Word of God and get God's point of view on sin…….. To put sin to death, therefore, we must meditate often on the dangerous effects of sin…… To put sin to death, therefore, we must meditate often on the dangerous effects of sin. Let us not be guilty of making the same mistake as the young man in Proverbs 7, who walked into sin unaware. Scripture says that this man did not know that yielding to sin was serious. He never gave what he was doing a second thought.[[31]](#endnote-31)*
* *So serious is the damaging effect of sin, Jesus uses a radical illustration to shock us to our senses. Stop now and think about the horrific effects of sin upon your soul. The grief that it causes God and those who care for you. Are you concerned about grieving that significant person in your life? In what specific way has this caused you to respond?*

C. There are four prominent factors in achieving this.

1. We must recognize the fact that we will be tempted to repeat our sin.

a. Forgiveness does not automatically preclude repetition. If we are not aware of these facts, we will not be concerned about them. If we are not concerned, we will do nothing to prevent a repetition of the past. *We* must be realistically alerted to the possibility of future failure.

2. We must prepare ourselves to meet and defeat temptation in the future.

a. We get into trouble largely because we do nothing to prevent it. Jesus is concerned not only about forgiveness; He is even more concerned to help us take every precaution against future failure. That is why He spoke about the necessity for radical amputation. *Preventive as well as remedial work is needed in order for complete renewal, de-habituating from sin and habituating our lives to godliness.* This work of radical amputation is fundamental to the de-habituation process.

3. If the problem of past patterns surfacing in the future cannot be avoided (by hoping it will go away, for instance, then something definitive must be done to prevent the Christian from falling into old sinful ways.

a. The passage in Matthew 5 directs him to take definitive, concrete, radical action. The offending member-eye, hand foot; it doesn't matter-must be removed so that it no longer can be used to commit the sin in question; that is radical amputation. The concept seems to grow out of the problem of sinning in the heart by lusting after a woman with the eye. In such a case the eye must be torn out and dispensed with. But mention of the hand-and in another place, the foot-extends the principle to all of life.

4. Nothing must be spared in this process; it is radical.

a. Even the right eye, the right foot, the right hand, must be forfeited if necessary. That is to say that it is so important to take this preventive action that even the most valuable organs must be eliminated when necessary. Improper conduct must be curtailed even at the greatest cost. And the means used is radical (but effective)--amputate; after all, an amputated limb cannot be used again.

Do you think that the sin that you are struggling with remains a problem because you have not radically severed it from your life, or what is your thinking here?

* *Although Jesus did not intend physical mutilation of the body. However, He does indicate in the strongest possible terms that a radical evil demands a radical cure. The main idea is that the cost to the soul is so utterly devastating that if anything interferes with a man’s right standing before God, that sin should be eliminated regardless of the cost. [[32]](#endnote-32)*
* *This sounds hard. I do not wonder. Our sins are often as dear to us as our children: we love them, hug them, cleave to them and delight in them. To part with them is as hard as cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye. But it must be done. The parting must come. “Though wickedness be sweet in the sinner’s mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not,” yet it must be given up, if he wishes to be saved Job 20:12, 13. He and sin must quarrel if he and God are to be friends. Christ is willing to receive any sinners. But He will not receive them if they will stick to their sins.[[33]](#endnote-33)*
* *True Christianity will cost a man his sins. He must be willing to give up every habit and practice which is wrong in God’s sight. He must set his face against it, quarrel with it, break off from it, fight with it, crucify it and labor to keep it under, whatever the world around him may say or think. He must do this honestly and fairly. There must be no separate truce with any special sin which he loves. He must count all sins as his deadly enemies and hate every false way. Whether little or great, whether open or secret, all his sins must be thoroughly renounced. They may struggle hard with him every day and sometimes almost get the mastery over him. But he must never give way to them. He must keep up a perpetual war with his sins. It is written, “Cast away from you all your transgressions.” “Break off thy sins . . . and iniquities.” “Cease to do evil” Ezek. 18:31; Dan. 4:27; Isa. 1:16.[[34]](#endnote-34)*
* *This means all-out war against the cancerous effects of sin. If you are waging war against this reoccurring sin what does that war look like, what are your tactics? Can you describe what this looks like in your life?*

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VI. What does all this mean? Obviously it is not to be taken literally.

Mat 18:7-9 "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! 8 And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

*(Again to repeat our comments earlier. To emphasize the seriousness of allowing one's life to be captured by sensuality, Jesus used the symbolic language of mutilating the body to overcome lust. His vivid description of purging the body of eyes or hand indicates how vital it is to overcome lust in one's heart. Only a change of heart can banish this sin from one's life.) [[35]](#endnote-35)*

Mat 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

*(There was a Babylonian law that called for the amputation of the right hand of the physician whose patient died during surgery.) [[36]](#endnote-36)*

*(I would say that is pretty radical. The picture of amputation itself is certainly not very appealing. It of course is the complete severance of the limb so that it is no longer useful.) You must realize the utter serious nature of “cutting off” sin from your life, it is a cancer, it must be taken out of your life! What Jesus is calling for here is not physical mutilation, but spiritual mortification – the cutting off of harmful practices in life.[[37]](#endnote-37)*

A. A man who lusts after a woman can continue to do so in his "mind's eye," even if both of his physical eyes are removed.

1. There are several elements to note.

Clearly, the Christian (somehow or other) must make it very difficult (if not impossible) for him to sin the same sin again.

3. To do so, he may have to put impediments in his own way. He may have to excise certain things, people or practices from the orbit of his daily life.

(Some years ago a man living in Wales had the misfortune of being involved in a mining accident which necessitated the amputation of his right leg. After a period in the hospital, he went to a prosthesis maker to be supplied with an artificial leg. When the appendage had been strapped to the stump, which was all that remained of the injured leg, the attendant requested that the patient get up and walk across the floor. Awkwardly, the man struggled to his feet and staggered across the room. Then, dragging himself painfully back to his chair, he slumped into it, utterly exhausted and discouraged. “That’s not how to do it,” said the attendant. “Watch this!” Then he walked gracefully across the floor. “Ah,” exclaimed the patient, “It’s all very easy for you because you don’t have any disability.” “Oh, haven’t I?” replied the attendant. “Look.” Pulling up the legs of his trousers, he disclosed that he was not wearing just one artificial limb, but TWO!) (The point is that some of us even after we have amputated a part of sin out of our lives practice dragging ourselves back to it in order to enjoy its sinful pleasure – we are willing to go back to again if it means reattaching some kind of means to do so).

B. Whatever it takes, he must develop a preventive situation where:

1. He automatically becomes aware of the temptation and possibility for sin. To have to hobble over to a place of sin on his one remaining foot (so to speak) alerts him to what is going on--there will be no unconscious drifting into sin.

2. Stumbling blocks (occasions for falling into sin) will all be removed from his daily pathway so far as he is able to rearrange the circumstances to do so.

*In what ways could you put up road blocks toward the sin that is hampering your life?*

C. The believer is warned against ignoring this procedure by suggesting, as the alternative, that the whole man (not just a foot, or eye) might be thrown into hell.

1. This is not a salvation by works, or a suggestion that saved persons might ultimately be lost. Rather, it is a strong warning that if there is no concern about sin, no desire to keep from offending Christ, no struggle or effort made to prevent future failure and no progress in doing so, then there is no evidence of salvation to begin with. ……..*those who …*….. seem totally uninterested in the preventive dynamic of radical amputation. *…….. may not be true believer.*

CONCLUSION:

Such radical, definitive, preventive action may take any number of forms--breaking off bad influential relationships (*1 Cor 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*--note the first clause: "Don't be deceived..."; *people* constantly fool themselves into thinking that they don't have to do this), getting rid of pornographic materials, changing one's job, etc., etc. But, whatever it takes, radical, effective action must be taken; and it is essential to sanctification. Christ commanded it--and attached a warning. Dare we neglect it?

*How serious are you about saving your spiritual life from death and ruin. The following illustrations both speak to the will to live and survive, but in order to live and survive the persons had to do something very radical. Are you willing to do the same spiritually so that you will live, so that you can survive without loosing your spiritual life to captivating sin. [[38]](#endnote-38)*

*GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. - With no water and as little hope of survival, Aspen mountaineer Aron Ralston, 27, used a pocketknife to amputate his own arm and free himself from a boulder weighing 800-1,000 pounds that fell and trapped him for five days in a remote desert canyon in eastern Utah.*

*Pinned in a 3-foot wide slot canyon near the Maze District of Canyonlands National Park south of Moab, Utah, Ralston cut through his own arm below the elbow Thursday morning, applying a tourniquet and administering first aid before rigging anchors and fixing a rope to rappel to the bottom of Blue John Canyon and hiking out to meet rescuers. Ralston had been hiking alone when the boulder fell and pinned his right arm as he was moving through the narrow slot last Saturday afternoon, according to information from the sheriff's offices in Emery and Wayne counties.*

*Ralston cut through his own arm below the elbow Thursday... Ralston told rescuers that on Thursday morning he realized he would not survive unless he took drastic action. He had run out of water on Tuesday. Search efforts that had begun Wednesday evening yielded no signs of the hiker until he walked out of the canyon with two other hikers at about 3 p.m. Thursday. Ralston was taken to Allen Memorial Hospital in Moab where he was stabilized before transport to St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, Colo., for surgery. The episode marked Ralston's second brush with death since February, when he was buried in an avalanche while backcountry skiing in the Colorado Rockies. Ralston, an avid outdoorsman who has climbed 49 of Colorado's 14,000-foot-plus mountains, was buried up to his neck in the avalanche, managing to dig himself out along with a completely buried skiing companion within 15 minutes.*

*Ralston's pocketknife amputation was not the first in the region. In October 1993, Colorado fisherman Bill Jeracki cut off his leg at the knee when two boulders fell on his leg while angling alone in a remote canyon stream. Trapped and yelling for hours, Jeracki made the decision to sever the limb after the weather took a turn for the worse and he became concerned for his survival. He used hemostats from his fishing kit to close the severed artery and vein, then crawled a half mile back to his truck and drove to find help. (Solo climber Aron Ralston forced to amputate his own arm. Hiker Aron Ralston Cuts Off Own Arm to Survive May 2, 2003)*

*Are you as serious about surviving spiritual death as these men were to survive physical death? It will take that kind of radical implementation of biblical truth to rid yourself of dominating sin.[[39]](#endnote-39)*

*Here is a way to think though this continued battle with sin. Share these answers the next time we meet on a separate sheet of paper or in electronic form.*

1. What are your struggles?
2. How do you fight the battle against sin?
3. Do you have clear sin categories? Do you call what you do sin when it is sinful, or do you round the corners off your sin by relabeling, redefining, or other minimizing tactics?
4. Do you have a few friends who will call you out in love?
5. Have you given an accountability partner permission to speak into your life?
6. Who is this person and what relationship do they have with you?
7. Have you shared with them how you sin and how you are tempted to sin?
8. Do you keep your struggles private?

“This sounds hard. I do not wonder. Our sins are often as dear to us as our children: we love them, hug them, cleave to them and delight in them. To part with them is as hard as cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye. But it must be done. The parting must come. “Though wickedness be sweet in the sinner’s mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not,” yet it must be given up, if he wishes to be saved Job 20:12, 13. He and sin must quarrel if he and God are to be friends. Christ is willing to receive any sinners. But He will not receive them if they will stick to their sins.”[[40]](#endnote-40)

“True Christianity will cost a man *his sins.* He must be willing to give up every habit and practice which is wrong in God’s sight. He must set his face against it, quarrel with it, break off from it, fight with it, crucify it and labor to keep it under, whatever the world around him may say or think. He must do this honestly and fairly. There must be no separate truce with any special sin which he loves. He must count *all* sins as his deadly enemies and hate *every* false way. Whether little or great, whether open or secret, all his sins must be thoroughly renounced. They may struggle hard with him every day and sometimes almost get the mastery over him. But he must never give way to them. He must keep up a perpetual war with his sins. It is written, “Cast away from you all your transgressions.” “Break off thy sins . . . and iniquities.” “Cease to do evil” Ezek. 18:31; Dan. 4:27; Isa. 1:16.”[[41]](#endnote-41)

NOTES:

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Conclusion and life application principles

* To Summarize The Biblical Teaching, We May Say That Repentance Has Three Elements. [[42]](#endnote-42)

FIRST, Repentance Is A *Change Of Mind. (heart)* It includes a *realization* of sin, or as the Scripture puts it, "the knowledge of sin" Rom 3:20. The heart is never set against the mind in Scripture they are the same.

SECOND, Repentance Is A *Change Of Emotion.* It includes *regret* for sin, not merely for its consequences. This regret is emphasized by the Greek verb *metamelomai* 2 Cor. 7 :8-10, which signifies literally a change in what one cares for, and hence regret or sorrow.

THIRD, Repentance Is A *Change Of Will.* It includes a *repudiation* of sin, a basic change of purpose toward sin. This change of disposition from sin to God is emphasized by the Greek words most frequently employed for the verb "repent," and the noun "repentance " viz., *metanoeo* and *metanoia. Meta* means "to perceive," from *nous,* "mind." Thus, repentance is basically "a perception after," or "a change of perception, or mind." But this change is more than intellectual. *Metanoia* indicates a definite purpose to forsake sin and obey God. Shedd remarks, "Repentance is turning to God as the chief end of existence, and away from the creature as the chief end".

In proportion as we believe in the forgiving love of Christ, in that proportion we repent; and in proportion as we repent of sin and hate evil, we rejoice in the fullness of the absolution which Jesus is exalted to bestow. You will never value pardon unless you feel repentance; and you will never taste the deepest draught of repentance until you know that you are pardoned. It may seem a strange thing, but so it is—the bitterness of repentance and the sweetness of pardon blend in the flavor of every gracious life, and make up an incomparable happiness.[[43]](#endnote-43)

The Bible teaches that in addition to confessing sin and seeking God’s forgiveness, you need to pursue God’s powerful transforming grace by believing the good news and walking in faith and obedience to the gospel. God’s grace pardons you and forgives your sin, and God’s grace empowers you to live differently and be obedient to him. [[44]](#endnote-44) Today you can live differently, today you can be empowered by the gospel and God’s grace to change.

This is the great part of growing and changing. I am becoming more like Christ by learning how to creatively implement God’s Truth in my life. No one is a super saint, no one knows it all, and no one is growing at the same rate or in the same ways. God is calling us into conformity to Christ according to His sovereign will. Like Paul, we are all trying to attain, but none will be perfect. God, however, is not looking for a perfect model. He is in the business of perfecting His people by constantly showing us the Perfect Model, Jesus Christ. Christians who know the truth must be in subjection to the truth or it is sin. (James 4:17) If God has provided the model in His Son, the method through His sufficient Word, and the might by and through the Holy Spirit we can grow and change into His image. Remember the Holy Spirit of God takes the Holy Word of God and conforms you into the Holy Son of God. How that is accomplished is as varied as there are different people who are Christians. What is important is that you remember that you are responsible to grow and change in a creative manner.[[45]](#endnote-45)

1. Brad Hilgeman, Feel free to use this material but please give credit to the author. <https://christinyoucounseling.com> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Compliant or Repentant? Rob Green, Faith Biblical Counseling Ministries, Lafayette, IN, Nov 2, 2018 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Jay E. Adams, Confession, The Journal of Modern Ministry 2005, [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. David Powlison A Personal Liturgy of Confession The Journal of Biblical Counseling 2015 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. 2 These italicized promises come from Deuteronomy 31:6–8; Numbers 6:24–26; Exodus 34:6–7; Psalm 25:11, and 2 Corinthians 1:20. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. David Powlison A Personal Liturgy of Confession The Journal of Biblical Counseling 2015 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. See supplemental material *Radical Amputation pg. 26* [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Relationships: a mess worth making, Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. When Sinners Say "I Do“, Dave Harvey [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. The Crucial Questions Series, What Can I Do with My Guilt? R. C. Sproul [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Faith that endures: a practical commentary on the book of Hebrews, Pentecost, J. Dwight and Durham, Ken [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. The Crucial Questions Series, What Can I Do with My Guilt? R. C. Sproul [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. From forgiven to forgiving, Jay Edward Adams [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Complete in Him: A Guide to Understanding and Enjoying the Gospel, Michael Barrett [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Quoted by John MacArthur in his book, A Tale of Two Sons [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. *Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of American English* [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online* [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. *Miller, Repentance and the 20th Century Man, 19-20* [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. *James Gray, Concise Bible Commentary, Ages Library* [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. *The Expositor's Bible, comments on 2 Corinthians7, Chap 19, Repentance Unto Life. e-Sword edition.* [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. *Thomas Watson, The Lord’s Prayer, First Published As Part Of a Body Of Practical Divinity 1692, Ages Library* [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. *W.G.T. Shedd quote* [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. *MacArthur, John F., The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness.* [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. *Pink, A. W., The attributes of God. (Pages 84-85).*  [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. *C. H. Spurgeon, All of Grace*  [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the New Testament John 1:8-10*  [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. *J.I. Packer quote* [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. *Stuart Scott, Evaluating True Repentance vs. Penance, 2000 Nanc annual meeting.* [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. The majority of this study is taken from, *A Theology of Christian Counseling,* Jay E. Adams. I have altered Jay’s notes with my notes in order to use this as a study guide for counseling, my notes are italicized. See Jay Adams discussion on Radical Amputation in (A Theology of Christian Counseling Ch 16), for a more thorough understanding. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Brad Hilgeman, My notes [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Wayne A. Mack, A Fight to the Death: Taking Aim at Sin Within (Strength for Life) [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Brad Hilgeman, My Note, [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Ryle, J., Holiness : It's nature, hindrances, difficulties and roots. (Page 68) Christian Classics Foundation. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid. (Page 68) [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Brad Hilgeman, My notes [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. George Barton, Archaeology and the Bible (Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union, 1937), p. 400 [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Brad Hilgeman, My notes [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. *Ryle, J., Holiness : It's nature, hindrances, difficulties and roots. (Page 68) Christian Classics Foundation.* [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. *Ibid. (Page 68)* [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. *Alan Cairns, Dogmatic Theology, Dictionary of Theological Terms, Ambassador- Emerald. International*  [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. *C. H. Spurgeon, All of Grace*  [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Lambert, Heath, Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Brad Hilgeman, Change or Application bah.docx, also see study on Spiritual Journal bah.docx [↑](#endnote-ref-45)