

An Awakening in the American Church (part 9)
Repentance Implies Four Things for a Believer
8.25.2019

Review

Over the past 2 months, I've been addressing issues we face as Christians in America. I've been addressing the compromises that are keeping the church in America asleep while our nation is going into a moral freefall and quickly approaching a time of serious judgment.

Last week:

Five things to know about repentance...

1. Repentance opens us up to tremendous life change!
2. There is NO change without repentance.
3. Repentance begins with God showing us who we really are...so that we can change!
4. Repentance is for believers as well as non-christians. Repentance is a daily decision to yield my life to Jesus moment by moment, and to quickly acknowledge to Him any sin.
5. Repentance produces death to sin, selfishness, self-centeredness, and willful disobedience.

Michael Brown:

Repentance is God's activating grace.

John Milton:

Repentance is the golden key that opens the palace of eternity.

Oswald Chambers :

Self-knowledge is the first condition of repentance.

Repentance implies four things for a believer.

Repentance can be the beginning of real change in your life!

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NKJV)

That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, (23) and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 3:8-10 (NKJV)

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. (9) Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, (10) and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

1. Repentance means that I forsake what I am doing.

When we repent, we realize where we are and what we are doing that we know is wrong, and we decide that we are ready to make a huge change.

Repentance means I am ready to leave the behavior that I know will hurt God, others, and me.

When I am ready to repent, I realize that I can no longer do this and be right with God.

I realize that what I have been doing will either harm another person, or cause me to set a bad example for others who are watching and know I am a believer.

I realize that what I have been doing will hinder my walk with God, harden my conscience, and will have a detrimental effect on my life.

1 John 3:4-9 (AMPC)

Everyone who commits (practices) sin is guilty of lawlessness; for [that is what] sin is, lawlessness (the breaking, violating of God's law by transgression or neglect—being unrestrained and unregulated by His commands and His will).

(5) You know that He appeared in visible form and became Man to take away [upon Himself] sins, and in Him there is no sin [essentially and forever].

(6) No one who abides in Him [who lives and remains in communion with and in obedience to Him—deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] commits (practices) sin. No one who [habitually] sins has either seen or known Him [recognized, perceived, or understood Him, or has had an experiential acquaintance with Him]. (7) Boys (lads), let no one deceive and lead you astray. He who practices righteousness [who is upright, conforming to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action, living a consistently conscientious life] is righteous, even as He is righteous.

(8) [But] he who commits sin [who practices evildoing] is of the devil [takes his character from the evil one], for the devil has sinned (violated the divine law) from the beginning. The reason the Son of God was made manifest (visible) was to undo (destroy, loosen, and dissolve) the works the devil [has done].

(9) No one born (begotten) of God [deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] practices sin, for God's nature abides in him [His principle of life, the divine sperm, remains permanently within him]; and he cannot practice sinning because he is born (begotten) of God.

2. Repentance means that I embrace a new way of living life.

The story of the wayward son is an excellent example of the change repentance brings to life.

Luke 15:11-24 (NLT)

To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "A man had two sons.

(12) The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

(13) A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. (14) About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. (15) He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into

his fields to feed the pigs. (16) The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. (17) When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! (18) I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, (19) and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'" (20) So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. (21) His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.' (22) But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. (23) And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, (24) for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began."

Just like this son's father, God responds when we repent.

Repentance occurred when the son came to himself and saw what he was doing and how harmful it was.

It is a work of God to see your own need. We are usually blind to our own needs!

Repentance starts the process of our being freed from destructive habits and lifestyles!

3. Repentance means that I purposefully yield my will to God.

God will never force your will. At all times, He will allow you to do what you want to do. Your will is given to you by God, and it is sacred to Him.

Selfishness is perhaps the biggest product of the fall of man!

That may just be the reason that Jesus addresses the issue of the will so

strongly!

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)

All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Satan forces and coerces. God woos and convicts, but never, ever forces you against your will to do anything.

If you are stubborn by nature, beware! Your stubbornness could be your ruin.

Even if it hurts you, God will not violate your will.

God will let you do what you do, even if it costs you. That is how much He respects your power of choice.

Notice God's respect for your will:

Revelation 22:11-12 (NLT)

Let the one who is doing harm continue to do harm; let the one who is vile continue to be vile; let the one who is righteous continue to live righteously; let the one who is holy continue to be holy.

(12) Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.

Could it be that in this hour...both in the Church and in America...God is seeking to bring us to the end of our pride, self-sufficiency, and self-exaltation.

Notice how Jesus had to wrestle with His own human will...

Matthew 26:36-41 (NLT)

Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." (37) He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed.(38) He told

them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." (39) He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (40) Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? (41) Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!"

The Place of Crushing

Jesus had to make a decision to give Himself away at Gethsemane. Gethsemane was an olive grove where He and the disciples would often pray.

Gethsemane means *the place of crushing*.

It's where Jesus' human will wrestled with completing the will of God. It's the place where He subdued His flesh desires and human will and wholeheartedly went after the will of His Father.

Mark 8:34 (NLT)

Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.

Mark 8:34-38 (PHILLIPS)

Then he called his disciples and the people around him, and said to them, "If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps, he must give up all right to himself, take up his cross and follow me. (35) The man who tries to save his life will lose it; it is the man who loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's who will save it. (36) What good can it do a man to gain the whole world at the price of his own soul? (37) What can a man offer to buy back his soul once he has lost it? (38) If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the Father's glory with the holy angels around him."

Paul addresses the will of the believer in letting go of personal sins:

Romans 6:12-13 (NLT)

Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. (13) Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.

4. Repentance means that I keep a humble and teachable attitude towards God and His Word, knowing that I will be changing lifelong.

The Word of God has in it the Holy Spirit's power to free us from problems!

The Holy Spirit's power can be amazing if you will activate it. It can cancel the power of negative habits and help you carve a new path to godly living.

James 1:21-25

So get rid of all uncleanness and the rampant outgrowth of wickedness, and in a humble (gentle, modest) spirit receive and welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls. (22) But be doers of the Word [obey the message], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth]. (23) For if anyone only listens to the Word without obeying it and being a doer of it, he is like a man who looks carefully at his [own] natural face in a mirror; (24) For he thoughtfully observes himself, and then goes off and promptly forgets what he was like. (25) But he who looks carefully into the faultless law, the [law] of liberty, and is faithful to it and perseveres in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing (his life of obedience).

Ephesians 5:25-27 (NLT)

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her (26) to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. (27) He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and

without fault.

2 Corinthians 3:18

So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

John 17:17

Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your word, which is truth.

Psalms 37:31

The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.

Psalms 119:9,11

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word...
(11) Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

So remember:

1. Repentance means that I forsake what I am doing.
2. Repentance means that I embrace a new way of living life.
3. Repentance means that I purposefully yield my will to God.
4. Repentance means that I keep a humble and teachable attitude towards God and His Word, knowing that I will be changing lifelong.

Action Points:

1. In what area do you need to repent?
2. Are you following through in repentance by finding scripture that will help you in a weak area?
3. Have you given your will to Jesus in the area that challenges you?
4. Are you conscientiously seeking to let Jesus rule your thoughts, words, actions, and relationships?

