

**Ac. 17:30** [Paul preaching in Athens] In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

**QUOTE #1** What urgent note characterized apostolic preaching but is scarcely heard in the church today? Why, of course, repentance! Time after time throughout the New Testament the call to repentance was sounded. The preaching of John the Baptist was dominated by this theme. With it he opened and closed his ministry. For the cause of repentance he lived and died. The mandatory nature of repentance was woven throughout the entire fabric of the life and ministry of Jesus himself and its urgent necessity repeatedly proclaimed. The church began, according to the book of Acts, with earnest calls to repentance and with severe warnings against those who refused to heed the call. At no time throughout the entire New Testament does this dominant theme disappear. Even the Revelation of Jesus Christ given to John on the Island of Patmos focused on the urgent necessity of repentance in five of the seven letters sent to the churches in the province of Asia. From beginning to end, the plain demand of the New Testament is ***repent or perish!***

Why is so little heard on this subject in our day? How can we explain the existence of so many professing Christians in our churches who are not repentant? How can so many ministers justify their failure to make earnest calls to repentance a constant theme in their preaching when both the New Testament requires it and the lives of their people demonstrate its need?

With spiritual declension on every hand, with moral corruption rolling over the nation like a tidal wave, can there be any biblical doctrine more needed now than repentance?

- Richard Owen Roberts, Revival, p.65

**QUOTE #2** Repentance. The Bible commands it. Our wickedness demands it. Justice requires it. Christ preached it. And God expects it. The divine, unalterable edict is still valid, "God... commandeth all men everywhere to repent."  
- Billy Graham

## **1. repentance described and explained**

**2Co. 7:9-11** yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

**STORIES** A man who gets caught robbing a shop kills the shopkeeper in an attempt to escape. He is soon captured by the police, found guilty of murder, and is sentenced to die. As he faces death, he says he is sorry, but rather likely he is only sorry that he got caught and now has to die for his crime.

A girl lives a life of sin with many men because of the lust of the flesh. When the consequences of her lifestyle begin to catch up with her and she lies dying of a dreadful disease, she says she is sorry, but the issue is: Why is she sorry? What is she sorry for?

Anyone can be sorry that they have to face the consequences of their actions. But this is worldly sorrow and not Godly sorrow. Godly sorrow recognizes the pain suffered by ***The Almighty*** when the sin was committed. Then, out of a love for God, it resolves never again to bring such heartache upon the One who is so full of love for all people.

**Mt. 27:3-5** When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."  
"What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."  
So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

**Col. 2:23** Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

**ISSUE** The issue is that Christ has already taken the punishment for our sin when he died on the cross. When we punish ourselves for our sin, we are actually declaring, by our actions, that his sacrificial death was insufficient..... not good enough.....

**Ac. 8:18-24** When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

**Mt. 23:27-28** "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

**Ro. 8:1** Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

**QUOTE #3** With both condemnation and conviction we'll have a realization that we did wrong, that we blew it. No one will have to show us the error of our ways, because we see our sin clearly. However, condemnation goes on to say, "**You're a miserable failure. You're no good. There's no hope for you. You may as well just give up because you'll never amount to anything.**" That's condemnation. Conviction, on the other hand, says, "**Yeah, you blew it, but there's still hope. You can get right with God. You can repent. You did wrong, but you can throw yourself on the mercies of God. He still loves you. He still considers you to be precious and valuable. There's a solution to the problem you've created. This can be fixed. Run to God.**" That's conviction. Do you see the difference? Condemnation offers no hope, whereas conviction points us to the remedy, and the remedy is always the same – God is our remedy.

**QUOTE #4** You must know what is right before you can know what is wrong. If you get on the wrong road, you will never know it until you have some knowledge of the right road. You stray off the highway and first you miss the familiar markings, the customary scenery, and then suddenly the conviction strikes you that you have lost your way. There can be no turning back unless first there is a conviction that you are going the wrong way.

Spiritual conviction is like that. It is a signpost planted in the heart saying, "Stop, look,

listen! Danger ahead!" The Spirit of God, your conscience, and your better judgment all join to warn, "Detour! Change! You're on the wrong road!" If you have this conviction, be thankful. God is waving the red flag, like a watchman standing guard where a bridge is out, directing you to change your course before it's too late.

- Billy Graham

## **2. results of repentance**

**Ac. 26:20** [Paul speaking to King Agrippa] First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

***Genuine repentance is evidenced by a genuinely changed life.***

**Lk. 3:7-14** John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

"Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely – be content with your pay."

**Ps. 32:3-5** When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.  
*Selah*

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD" – and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*

**Lk. 19:8-9** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham."

**Ac. 3:19** [Peter is preaching] Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

**2Co. 7:1** Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

**2Chr. 32:26** Then Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart, as did the people of Jerusalem; therefore the LORD's wrath did not come upon them during the days of Hezekiah.

**1Jn. 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**Jer. 18:7-8** [God speaking] If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned.

**Lk. 15:7** [Jesus speaking] I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

**Lk. 15:10** [Jesus speaking] In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

### **3. hindrances to repentance**

**Mt. 15:16** “Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them [the disciples].

**Mk. 8:18** [Jesus again speaking to his disciples] Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?

**Pr. 26:12** Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

**Is. 5:21** Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.

**Pr. 3:7** Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.

**Poem** Here lie the bones of John LaDay,  
Who died, maintaining his right of way.  
He was right, dead right, as he went along.  
But he's just as dead as if he'd been wrong.

**Am. 5:15a** Hate evil, love good;

**Pr. 8:13a** To fear the Lord is to hate evil,

**Pr. 13:5a** The righteous hate what is false,

**Pr. 15:27b** ...but he who hates bribes will live.

**Pr. 28:16b** ...but he who hates ill-gotten gain will enjoy a long life.

**Heb. 1:9** [speaking of Jesus Christ] You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

**Pr. 16:18** Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

**Pr. 16:5** The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.

**Pr. 18:12** Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.

**1Pt. 5:5a-6** All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

**Ps. 36:1** An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes.

**Ex. 20:20** Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning."

**1Pt. 2:17** Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

**Eph. 3:20** Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

**Ps. 68:35** You are awesome, O God, in your sanctuary; the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Praise be to God!

**Jas. 1:2-4** Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

**Heb. 10:36** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

**Lk. 11:5-10** Then he [Jesus] said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'

"Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

## **4. examples of repentance**

**Mt. 12:41** [Jesus speaking] The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

**Jnh. 3:4-10** On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or

beast, heard or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

**Job 42:5-6** [Job speaking to the Lord] My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

**2Sa. 12:9-14** [Nathan speaking to King David] Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’

“This is what the LORD says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.’”

Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.”

Nathan replied, “The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.”

**Ps. 51:1-19** look up if needed

**Lk. 22:59-62** About an hour later another asserted, “Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.”

Peter replied, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

## **5. repentance in the Scripture**

**Ac. 17:30** [Paul is preaching in Athens] In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

**Ac. 11:18** When they [church leaders in Jerusalem] heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”

**2Ti. 2:25-26** Those who oppose him [the Lord’s servant] he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

**Ro. 2:4** Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?

**Eph. 2:1-2** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

**Mk. 1:14-15** After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

**Lk. 13:3** [Jesus speaking] ...But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

**Rev. 2:4-5** [Jesus speaking] Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

**Rev. 2:14-16** [Jesus speaking] Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

**Rev. 2:20-23** [Jesus speaking] Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.

**Rev. 3:1b-3** [Jesus speaking] These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my god. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

**Rev. 3:15-19** [Jesus speaking] I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those who I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

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**Mt. 3:1-2** In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

**Mt. 3:8** [John the Baptist speaking] Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

- Mt. 3:11** [John the Baptist speaking] “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
- Mk. 1:4** And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
- Lk. 3:3** He [John son of Zechariah] went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
- Ac. 13:24** Before the coming of Jesus, John [that is, John the Baptist] preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel.
- Mt. 4:17** From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”
- Mk. 1:14-15** After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”
- Lk. 5:32** [Jesus speaking] I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
- Lk. 13:1-5** Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them – do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”
- Mk. 6:12** They [the Twelve] went out and preached that people should repent.
- Lk. 24:46-47** He [Jesus] told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- Ac. 2:38** Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Ac. 3:19** [Peter preaching] Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,
- Ac. 17:30** [Paul preaching in Athens] In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.
- Ac. 20:21** [Paul speaking] I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.
- Ac. 26:20** [Paul speaking to King Agrippa] First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.



**Ez. 18:30b**

Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall.