

THE PATH OF TRUE REPENTANCE 71  
(From Gospel Minutes Oct. 12, 1990)

Text: Matt. 21:28-32 But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

Introduction:

A. The importance of repentance in the life of a servant of God can hardly be overemphasized.

1. Rom. 3:23 "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"
2. Luke 13:3 "I tell you nay but except you repent you will all likewise perish."

3. Without repentance there can be no forgiveness of sin- Lk. 24:46-47 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

B. The Apostles preached repentance as a basic part of the gospel:

1. Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
2. Acts 3:19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,
3. Acts 17:30-31 "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.

C. What exactly is repentance?

1. The word means "Resolve to change one's life, change of mind (Webster). It literally means to change your mind that brings about a change of action.

2. Evangelical repentance consists of: (1) a true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness; (2) an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ; (3) an actual hatred of sin (Ps. 119:128; Job 42:5-6; 2 Cor. 7:10) and turning from it to God; and (4) a persistent endeavor after a holy life in a walking with God in the way of his commandments. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

3. Repentance involves a change of mind about your life and actions.

D. Notice our text. **But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go**

E. Today we want to notice these points:

1. What leads a person to repentance?
2. What does a person do as a result of repenting?
3. What repentance leads to?

BODY: WHAT IS THE PATH OF TRUE REPENTANCE?

I. WHAT LEADS A PERSON TO REPENTANCE? (GODLY SORROW).

A. Sorrow of the right kind is a basic motivation to repent- 2 Cor. 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

B. The wrong kind leads the other direction.

C. Pharaoh was "sorry" Ex. 9:27 but notice V. 34. **And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants.**

D. King Saul example of wrong sorrow- 1 Sam. 15:30 **Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God."**

E. Many are not so much sorry for what they have done but rather that they have been caught and had to face the consequences.

F. Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation.

1. Peter denied the Lord 3 times- Matt. 26:69-74 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee."

But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth." But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.

2. He repented- Matt. 26:75. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.

3. He later faced the same people- Acts 2:22-24, Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. V. 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

4. That is real repentance, which is the result of godly sorrow.

G. David another example.

1. David committed a series of terrible sins.

2. When rebuked he said- "I have sinned" no excuses no if's and's and but's. 2 Sam. 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

3. His sorrow led him to repent and be restored.

H. The Prodigal son- Lk. 15:18-19 `I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."

## II. CONFESSING SIN NATURALLY FOLLOWS REPENTANCE.

A. Notice the difference between Saul and David.

1. David:

a. 2 Sam. 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

b. Psal 51:4 (NKJV) Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight--That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

2. Saul- 1 Sam. 15:30 **Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God."**

2. Both Admitted their sin.

3. One was sorry he got caught, the other sorry he sinned.

B. Ezra led Israel to repentance notice his words- Ezra 9:6 **And I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.**

C. When one genuinely repents he doesn't try to "cover up" he admits his sin and then is able to seek the help of others.

D. Notice also 1 Jn. 1:7-10 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us..

E. An erroneous idea about confessing sin.

1. We don't confess to God because He doesn't know about our sins.

2. To confess means to 'apologize'.

3. Notice:

a. Ezra 9:6. And I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.

b. Dan. 9:3-8 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, "we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. "Neither have we

heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day--to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You..

- c. 2 Sam. 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

4. Not a listing of their sin but an apology.

### III. TRUE REPENTANCE LEADS TO A DIFFERENT LIFE.

A. Lk. 13:3 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

B. Once a person truly repents, he can't go back too doing the same thing he did before.

C. Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

D. Acts 20:21 we repent toward God. **"testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

E. Notice Rom. 6:1-4 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

F. 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

G. 1 Pet. 1:13-19 That is what repentance does. "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with

corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

#### IV. REPENTANCE SEEKS TO MAKE RESTITUTION.

A. It always seeks too, sometimes cannot.

1. Murder cannot be undone but restitution can be made to the persons family and to the law.
2. Sin of adultery cannot be undone, nor can gossip.

B. It is fundamental in true repentance that restitution be made.

C. Acts 16:33 **And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized..**

D. Lk. 19:5-10. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

E. When one repents, he seeks to recompense those whom he previously has wronged.

#### CONCLUSION:

A. What is the path of true repentance?

1. Godly sorrow.
2. Confessing sin.
3. Different life.
4. Restitution as far as possible.

B. Do you need to truly repent?