



Jesus... the key to setting the captives free! ~ John 8:31-32

True Repentance is Crucially Important in these Last Days

" I was in prison and you came to visit me." ~ Matthew 25:36

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November 25, 2016

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Dear Reader,

We pray you are enjoying the unconditional love of the Father, the truth of Jesus, and the incredible power of the Holy Spirit!

This letter is of utmost importance, and we ask you to study it with an open spiritual mind and heart so that you may receive what the Holy Spirit wants you to know and understand, as He guides you through these perilous times in which we are now living. Today, we want to share some very crucial information about "true repentance".

The Bible is very clear that true repentance is required for effective salvation. There are many scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments stressing the importance of true repentance. We have included over three pages of examples of such scripture as one of the enclosures to this letter. The Bible says to "Repent, and believe the Gospel."; "Repent, and be saved."; and, "Repent, and be baptized." ***Are you certain that you have come to salvation by way of true repentance?***

The enclosed materials provide more details, but in summary, "true repentance" involves a real ***change of heart***, leading to a complete ***change of mind***, which in turn leads to a permanent ***change of direction*** - away from sin and toward the Father. It is like making a U-turn when you are going the wrong way down a one-way street. You realize in your mind that you are headed the wrong way, and you have a change of heart that makes you want to turn completely around to go in the correct but opposite direction. There will be visible evidence of the change, and you will resolve not to turn back around the wrong way.

In our new direction, if we temporarily stumble, we do not let the enemy's lies convince us to turn permanently back to our old direction. Instead, we quickly confess our sin (1 John 1:9), and we allow the Holy Spirit to empower and encourage us to get up and continue on the right path towards the Father. ***True repentance has evidence of a permanently changed direction, and a significantly changed life.***

If you ever prayed a prayer of salvation before but nothing ever changed about the direction of your life, I strongly suggest to you that you did not repent. ***If you did not repent, you did not get saved! God heard your words but He read your heart.*** If you were not ready to turn from your old way of living and do your best to follow Jesus, then you did not repent. In your mind you may have wanted the benefits of salvation, but in your heart you were not really willing to allow Jesus to be the Lord of your life.

Brothers and Sisters, in these last days there is a sense of urgency in us to implore you to ***make certain you came to salvation in Jesus Christ through true repentance.*** Please study the enclosed articles and tract diligently and prayerfully. Then consider sharing them with others.

Stay calm. Stay focused. Stay close to Him. Remember, Jesus loves you, and so do we,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don/Stephen".

Rev. Don G. Castleberry, Founder

Rev. Stephen Canup, President

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True Repentance

A decision to accept Jesus as Savior is not effective if it does not lead to a permanent change of direction – away from sin, towards God. This is evidence of “true repentance”.

Repentance is not an emotion – for example, not the feeling of “I am sorry”, or, “I feel bad about what I’ve done” – rather, **it is a decision**. It is like deciding to make a “U-turn” on a highway, You are then headed in the opposite direction from where you were going. Someone in true repentance does not just say “I’m sorry I did that”; they will also live a different life demonstrating a new mind-set of “I won’t do it again”.

The Greek words translated as “repentance” in the New Testament mean “to think differently”, “to afterwards reconsider”, “a reversal of a decision”, “to change your mind”, “to turn about in opinion”, “to turn about from an intended way”, and to change “attitudes, thoughts and behaviors concerning the demands of God for right living”. Similarly, Webster’s dictionary defines “repent” as “to turn from sin and resolve to reform one’s life”.

There are over 70 scriptures about repentance. Some of them include: Psalm 51:17; Matthew 3:1-2, 11; Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:4, 14-15; Mark 6:12; Luke 5:32; Luke 15:7; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts 11:18; II Corinthians 7:9-10; II Timothy 2:25, II Peter 3:9; and, Revelation 3:19.

True repentance is not just a change of mind. It is also a change of attitude and heart. It involves a Godly sorrow and regret because of personal sin, and results in a radical break with sin. J.C Ryle said, “The beginning of the way to heaven is to feel that we are on the way to hell”. Dr. Charles Stanley said, “An unrepentant man or woman is not condemned by God (to hell), rather has chosen to remain in the company of all those condemned by their own free will”.

In the Old Testament, Psalm 51, David gives us a great example of an attitude of true repentance. He has a “broken spirit and contrite heart” (Psalm 51:17) over his actions of adultery and murder surrounding his affair with Bathsheba. David knew he could not come to God with his own self-righteousness; rather, he approached God with a broken heart and a spirit willing to change. Lydia Reimer writes, “Repentance tears down the wall of separation that stands between us and God. It prepares us for His presence.” Be sure to read all of Psalm 51 carefully to get a more complete understanding of David’s exemplary approach to repentance.

The parable about the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24, is one of best teachings of Jesus that illustrates the kind of repentance it takes to go home to the Father. The “U-turn” occurs in verse 17 where it says “he came to himself”, or “he came to his senses”. He made a decision to turn around and go home. Then he took action by getting up out of his mess and actually going along the road home – in a different direction than when he left home earlier when “he set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living” (Luke 15:13).

Bible teacher R.B. Thieme, Jr. writes, “What does it mean to come to yourself? It means to look at life from the biblical perspective: to face up to the situation as it really exists; to recognize the sins in your own life; to stop rationalizing or justifying your sins; to stop blaming God or someone else (operation patsy) and to actually acknowledge your sin – to recognize that you are wrong and contrary to the Word of God.”

In Mere Christianity, author C.S. Lewis is describing the “hole” we find ourselves in before we come to our senses like the prodigal son. “Now what sort of ‘hole’ had (he) got himself into? He had tried to set up on his own, to behave as if he belonged to himself. In other words, fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms. Laying down your arms, surrendering, saying you are sorry, realizing that you have been on the wrong track and getting ready to start life all over again from the ground floor – that is the only way out of our ‘hole’. This process of surrender – this movement full speed astern (in the opposite direction) – is what Christians call repentance.”

Like the prodigal son, when I came to my senses in prison 10 months into my stay of 32 months, I was empty. I had a “longing” for something more than what I had available to me in my sin, my mess. I longed to “go home”. The parable of the prodigal son really got my attention. I could really identify with him. He demonstrated for me that true repentance is a “brokenness”, and a change of life-direction.

Has true repentance changed your direction? Have you made a “U-turn”? If not, please “run to God with repentance in one hand and praise in the other” (Tommy Tenney). Like me, you will be glad you did!!! ☺

Stephen Canup

REPENTANCE...GOD DEMANDS IT IF WE EXPECT TO SEE HEAVEN!

By: Don Castleberry

THERE ARE BENEFITS TO REPENTANCE

1. A new and clearer vision of JESUS.
2. 20/20 spiritual vision.
3. A new pair of lips, with proper words coming out.
4. Peace and strength, a new belief that JESUS really loves you!
5. Renewed faith that surpasses all previous understanding.
6. Wisdom, discernment, knowledge like never before.
7. The "want to" to never go back like you were before.
8. A new zeal for lost souls.
9. A new love for your family.
10. A new receptor for receiving the blessings of Father God.

I see a pair of scales in the distance. People are waiting their turn to stand on them. They think that if the good outweighs the bad they are all right.

WRONG! WRONG! WRONG!

Only the proper Biblical repentance is the one that God and Jesus will accept that day. If people do not repent with tears, deep sorrow for their sin, and a change of heart in the way they live, a change of character that represents goodness, a love for the Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit that is so deep that they don't understand it themselves, have they really repented? Or have they only accepted fire insurance to live the way they want, with the wrong thinking that they will make heaven?

NO! The servant that thought the Lord was delaying his coming began to beat his servants, get drunk and party with the prostitutes, and here is what the Lord says about him. "He will be cast into outer darkness where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." This was a servant of the Lord. He just backslid and gave up on repentance. It cost him his soul.

Repentance must be forever. God knows true repentance. The Bible tells us to examine ourselves to make sure that we are still in the faith. Have spiritual check points. Check yourself out on a regular basis. Be bold. I ask Holy Spirit if I am missing it somewhere. He is not shy. He tells me if there is a problem. I want to be quick to repent, quick to forgive.

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Jesus said that over 2,000 years ago. We are much closer now to the coming of Jesus. I am ready.

Don Castleberry

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



The Missing Link

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 24:44-49 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 55:6-7 | Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17 | Luke 5:32 | John 3:16
Acts 2:38; 16:25-34 | Romans 7:15; 8:29 | 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 | 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 | Ephesians 2:8-10 | Colossians 3:8
2 Peter 3:9 | 1 John 1:7-9 | Revelation 2:5

SUMMARY

Many of us have found ourselves repeatedly confessing the same sin to God, wondering why we can't overcome it.

At times like these, we feel trapped in Romans 7:15, "For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate." First John 1:9 assures us that if we confess our sins, God will forgive us, but merely confessing may not bring us victory. What is missing? What will help us get out of this cycle? The missing link is genuine repentance.

SERMON POINTS

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His apostles to proclaim repentance for the forgiveness of sins in His name to all the nations (Luke 24:47). This was not the first time the message of repentance had been announced, nor would it be the last.

- John the Baptist began his ministry with these words: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2).
- A short time later, Jesus came on the scene repeating the same message (Matt. 4:17).
- After the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, Peter boldly told the people, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 2:38).
- Later, the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "You were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God" (2 Cor. 7:9).

■ In Revelation 2:5, the glorified Christ admonished the church in Ephesus saying, "Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first."

What is repentance?

Repentance is heartfelt sorrow for sin followed by the renouncing of sin and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. It's not merely feeling remorse or guilt but changing direction. It includes a recognition that sin is against almighty God and is utterly wrong. When we have truly repented, the result is a changed life. We forsake our former ways and thoughts and return to the Lord (Isa. 55:7).

Repentance is essential for believers.

Sin does not fit in our lives because God has predestined that we "become conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. 8:29). Whenever we sin, the indwelling Holy Spirit convicts us so we can confess and repent. We should never ignore, tolerate, accept, or practice what we know to be sinful. It not only offends God, but also hurts us.

Repentance is essential for salvation.

God made the way of salvation simple, yet there is so much confusion about it. Some people say all we have to do is believe in Jesus. In their view, repentance and submitting to the lordship of Christ are not a part of salvation. Others think joining a church, being baptized, giving money, and doing good works are all that's necessary.

Salvation is by faith and not works, but we need to clarify what "believing in Jesus" means. This

expression encompasses so much more than merely believing what the Bible says about Him. Saving faith is more than mental agreement with the truth. It includes an acknowledgement that Jesus is the Son of God who died for our sins, as well as the recognition of our own sinfulness. We become sorrowful under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and desire a changed life. Believing in Jesus includes complete trust in Him for salvation, repentance from past sins, and surrender of our lives fully to Him.

In the New Testament, salvation and repentance are often equated. When Jesus spoke of salvation in Luke 5:32, He said, "I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Peter also spoke of salvation when he wrote that the Lord does not wish "for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Another area of confusion is the lordship of Christ. Some people want to claim Jesus as Savior but not as Lord. They desire His forgiveness and a guarantee of heaven, but they don't want Him telling them how to live. The problem with this approach is not only that it is extremely selfish; it's also contrary to the very identity of the Son of God. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, and we cannot remove the fact that He is our Lord and God. Those who are truly repentant are willing to submit to Christ and let Him lead them in a new direction.

Repentance results in a changed life.

After salvation, we begin a brand new life. Although we don't understand all that's involved at that moment, the Holy Spirit works within us to convict us of sin, draw us to repentance, and guide us on a new path of obedience. We all begin as spiritual babies, but the Lord wants us to continually grow in Him, and repentance is a large part of this process. If we stop turning away from sin, we will stop growing and stay "infants in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1-2).

We are not perfect, but we are responsible for what we do.

After our salvation, we should desire to please the Lord and do the good works He has planned for

us (Eph. 2:8-10). If we are genuinely saved, we will never be happy or satisfied living in sin because we now have a new nature through the Holy Spirit who indwells us. When He convicts us of sin, our first response should be to ask Him for forgiveness.

What does confession mean?

Confession means to agree with God that what we did was wrong. But that alone will not keep us from repeating it. That's why repentance should always be a part of confession. We are called to live a sanctified life, one that is set apart for God and His purposes. Confession and repentance are an important part of sanctification.

When we live a sanctified life, we walk in obedience to Christ. However, according to 1 John 1:7-9, we deceive ourselves if we think we'll never sin. That's why we are told to confess our sins to God. Christ not only forgives us but continually works to cleanse us, making our lives different. He helps us put away the sin and turn back to Him in obedience (Col. 3:8).

RESPONSE

- Is there a particular sin you repeatedly confess? What is it? Why do you think you keep struggling with it? What steps can you take to truly repent and turn from it?
- Do you tend to view confession and repentance as a negative experience that makes you feel guilty or worthless or as an opportunity for cleansing and a fresh start? How could a positive perspective of this privilege encourage confession, and motivate you to live a holy life?

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Repentance: The Decision to Return to God

By: Dr. Charles Stanley

Do you feel trapped by a bad habit or tormented by guilt? Repentance is the key to finding freedom and joy again. Begin by reading the story of David and Bathsheba, which is found in [2 Samuel 11:1-12:25](#).

A. What attitudes masquerade as repentance?

Someone may pray, "Lord, I really regret getting caught. Now, everyone knows about my wrongdoing." Or, "God, I'm really sorry I sinned. I certainly *hope* I can do better next time." These types of responses are usually prompted by guilt or embarrassment rather than a heartfelt sense of remorse. They include no commitment to responding differently to the temptation in the future, and no admission that our choice to rebel against the Lord is harmful to us and others. Believers talk to God this way when we simply want to escape the conviction of the Holy Spirit or feel better about ourselves. That's why a "confession" like the ones above is not genuine repentance.

- What factors can motivate a person to avoid responsibility for wrongdoing?
- How can sadness over sin be an effective tool in a believer's life ([2 Cor. 7:8-10](#))?

B. What does genuine repentance involve?

1. We must confess.

Christians shouldn't just say, "Lord, I'm sorry for my mistake." Rather, they should acknowledge, "Lord, I have sinned against You."

- What physical symptoms can accompany unconfessed sin ([Ps. 32:3-4](#))?
- What does God guarantee if we admit our transgressions and forsake them ([Prov. 28:13](#))?
- Describe the promise outlined in [James 5:16](#).

Note: Given its context, this verse most likely refers to *spiritual* healing in which a particular sin no longer holds us in its grip.

2. We must acknowledge that any transgression is primarily against God.

Although others may be hurt by our sin, believers should recognize that our greatest offense is against the Lord.

- After Nathan confronted him, David composed [Psalm 51](#). Why did he feel that God's judgment was just and blameless ([Ps. 51:4](#))?

This doesn't mean that David failed to recognize the wrong he had done against Uriah and Bathsheba. However, he realized that his sin was chiefly against the Lord.

- In light of Christ's sacrifice on the cross for our sins, why are our transgressions always against the Lord?

3. We must take full responsibility for sin.

Anytime we try to blame someone else for our wrongdoing, repentance is incomplete. Ultimately, each individual involved in a sin has made a decision to rebel against God. David didn't rationalize, "Lord, I wasn't the only one involved. You know it takes two. She should have been more careful. I am only human."

- What was the king's immediate response when confronted with the specifics of his sin and God's judgment ([2 Sam. 12:13](#))?
- Why do you think he didn't even mention Bathsheba?
- Do you tend to pass the blame to others, or do you typically own up to your sin? Why?

4. Repentance involves total honesty with God.

The Lord wants us to be honest about our sin, weaknesses, and frustrations. Truthfulness promotes fellowship. As long as we are open with Him, He can continue to work with us.

Trouble starts when believers make excuses: "Now, Lord, I just made a mistake. After all, everybody has faults. Nobody is perfect." Responding like this avoids the real issue. It is therefore dishonest. Those who constantly deny their guilt will not mature spiritually or find freedom from sin.

- Why do you think the Lord appreciates "a broken and contrite heart" (Ps. 51:17)?
- David wrote that God desires "truth in the innermost being" (Ps. 51:6). In other words, we need to be totally honest with ourselves and the Lord. Are you usually able to do this regarding your sin and weaknesses? Why or why not?

C. What happens when we delay our repentance?

After David committed adultery, he didn't confess it immediately or even of his own accord.

- Why do you think Nathan's story was so effective at revealing God's perspective on David's sin (2 Sam 12:1-6)?

The Bible teaches that the Lord disciplines those who are disobedient.

- What was the consequence of the king's sin (2 Sam. 12:14)?

David's failure to repent sooner increased the severity of the penalty for his rebellion. But if we deal with our sin genuinely, openly, and immediately, God often lessens the harshness of His chastisement. Why is that? Because if He sees that we have purposed to obey next time, stern correction is usually not needed.

The longer we put off repentance, the greater God's discipline. Those who are wise will repent quickly.

- Is the Lord prompting you to repent of a particular sin? If so, pray about it, or write a short confession in the space below.

Closing: False confession keeps us trapped in guilt and sin. Genuine repentance allows us to experience renewed fellowship with the Lord. When God convicts you of wrongdoing, honestly admit your sin and turn away from it. You won't regret it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to be obedient children who keep short accounts with You. May we quickly repent of sin. Thank You for graciously restoring us to fellowship with You. In Your precious Son's name we pray. Amen.

Adapted from "Charles Stanley's Handbook for Christian Living" (1996).

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Biblical Repentance

A Forgotten Prerequisite to Salvation

"If you do not change your direction you will end up where you are headed!" Source unknown

"To repent means to turn sincerely from all sinfulness and rebellion and submit ourselves without reservation to God and His requirements" Derek Prince

True Repentance is Required for Salvation:

A decision to accept Jesus as Savior is not effective if it does not lead to a permanent change of direction – away from sin, towards God. **Repentance is not an emotion** – for example, not the feeling of "I am sorry", or, "I feel bad about what I've done" – rather, **it is a decision**. It is like deciding to make a "U-turn" on a highway. You are then headed in the opposite direction from where you were going. Someone in true repentance does not just say "I'm sorry I did that"; they will also live a different life demonstrating a new mind-set of "I won't do it again".

Requirement of Repentance in the New Testament:

Matthew 3:1-2 ¹In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ²and saying, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.**"

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

Mark 6:12 They (the Disciples) went out and **preached that people should repent.**

Luke 5:32 (Jesus said) I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance.**

Luke 13:1-3 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³I tell you, no! But **unless you repent, you too will all perish.**

Luke 15:7 (Jesus said) 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.

Luke 15:9-10 (Jesus said) ⁹And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over **one sinner who repents.**"

Luke 24:45-47 (Jesus to His disciples after the resurrection) ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and **repentance for the forgiveness of sins** will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 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.

Acts 3:19-20 (Peter said) ¹⁹**Repent, then, and turn to God**, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.

Acts 8:22 **Repent of this wickedness** and pray to the Lord in the hope **that he may forgive you** for having such a thought in your heart.

Acts 17:30 (Paul said) In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he **commands all people everywhere to repent.**

Acts 20:20-21 (Paul said) ²⁰You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ²¹I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that **they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.**

Acts 26:16-18 (Jesus told Paul) ¹⁶‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸**to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’**

Romans 2:3-4 ³So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgment? ⁴Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that **God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?**

2 Corinthians 7:8-10 ⁸Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— ⁹yet 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. ¹⁰**Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation** and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, **“Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”**

2 Timothy 2:25-26 ²⁵Opponents must be gently instructed, **in the hope that God will grant them repentance** leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶and **that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil,** who has taken them captive to do his will.

1 Peter 2:25 For “you were like sheep going astray,”^[a] but now **you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.**

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but **everyone to come to repentance.**

Rev. 2:5 (Jesus said) Consider how far 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 3:19 (Jesus said) Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So **be earnest and repent.**

Old Testament Passages Requiring Repentance:

2 Chronicles 7:14 ...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways,** then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. **Return to me,** for I have redeemed you.

Isaiah 45:22 **Turn to me and be saved,** all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. **Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them,** and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

Ezekiel 18:30-32 ³⁰“Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. **Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall.** ³¹Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and **get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die,** people of Israel? ³²For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. **Repent and live!**

Proof of Repentance:

Matthew 3:7-8 ⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸**Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.**

Acts 26:20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, **I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.**

II Cor. 7:8-11 ⁸Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— ⁹yet 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. ¹⁰**Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret,** but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹See 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.

Effect of Repentance:

2 Chronicles 7:14 ...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and **I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.**

Psalms 32:5 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.**

Psalms 34:14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Psalms 37:27-29 ²⁷Turn from evil and do good; then **you will dwell in the land forever.** ²⁸**For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones.** Wrongdoers will be completely destroyed; the offspring of the wicked will perish. ²⁹**The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever.**

Ezekiel 18:21-22 **But if a wicked person turns away from all the sins they have committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, that person will surely live; they will not die.** ²²**None of the offenses they have committed will be remembered against them.** Because of the righteous things they have done, they will live.

Isaiah 1:15-20 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of blood! ¹⁶Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. ¹⁷Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

¹⁸“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the LORD. **“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.** ¹⁹**If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good**

things of the land; ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the LORD has spoken

Isaiah 30:15 This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: **“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.**

2 Timothy 2:25-26 Opponents must be gently instructed, **in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,** ²⁶ 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.

Stay in God's Hands:

Psalms 37:23-24 ²³ The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; ²⁴ though he may stumble, he will not fall, **for the LORD upholds him with his hand.**

Isaiah 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; **I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

John 10:29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; **no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.**

Resisting Future Temptation:

Once you finally decide that the road you have been traveling in the past is the wrong way, it will become increasingly easier to resist every lie of the enemy designed to entice you to take the first step back down that road. You must know and believe that nothing good waits in that direction. From much repeated experience we know it is only filled with despair, depression, disappointment, destruction and death. We should daily confess this truth out-loud within our own hearing, and be openly and sincerely grateful to our Father for rescuing us from the dominion of darkness! See Colossians 1:13-14. As we do this, our lives will be filled with the fruit and evidence of true repentance, and our salvation is assured.

Stephen Canup