



First Baptist Church At The Villages

CONFIDENCE IN GODLY SORROW: CONFIDENCE THROUGH REPENTANCE (5/31) •

STUDY TITLE: REPENTANCE • 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1-14; PSALM 51 •

FOR USE 5/31/ THROUGH 6/6/2020

MAIN POINT

God's restoration begins with repentance, a turning from the old way of life and a living in the newness of life in Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As your study time begins, use this section to focus your mind and hear the topic of this lesson.

How would you define repentance? How would most people in our community define repentance?

What is the result of genuine repentance? What is the result of repentance that is not genuine?

How is a life lived in a posture of repentance usually characterized?

Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of that sin, and a sincere commitment to turn from it and walk in obedience to Christ. Being a Christ-follower isn't just a matter of thinking and doing the right things and avoiding the wrong things. Foundational to being a Christian is a personal relationship with Jesus that empowers you to live for God and make decisions out of the leading of the Holy Spirit. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we are led to repentance because we desperately want to keep the intimacy of our relationship with God, not simply because of a need to behave rightly.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| READ 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1-9.

Paul spent 18 months in Corinth helping establish the church. He visited the church multiple times afterward, teaching and rebuking them to pursue holiness. Second Corinthians is Paul's most pastoral letter of all his epistles. The church had resisted his teaching earlier. It had been a painful process for him to continue to rebuke their sin and call for repentance, especially in the face of accusations and doubts of Paul's authority.

What does Paul call the church to focus on in verse 1? How does focusing on these promises help us repent?

Why do you think Paul struggled emotionally to call the Corinthians to repentance?

Have you ever approached someone else about the need to repent from sin? If so, what lessons did you learn from that experience?

How do you normally respond when someone points out the sin in your life? Do you have friends that you invite to correct or rebuke you?

How would people, who do not know Jesus, respond if you rebuked their sin? How should we, as Christians, respond when someone rebukes us?

| READ 2 CORINTHIANS 7:10-14.

Paul continues to outline the characteristics of genuine repentance. God requires godly sorrow over sin, not worldly sorrow that brings about no change in our lives. Godly sorrow is characterized by a commitment to forsake that sin and walk in obedience to God. Paul indicates further that his letter was painful to read, yet it brought about salvation. Scripture puts repentance and faith together as two aspects of the one act of coming to Christ for salvation. When we turn to Christ for salvation, we turn away from the sin that we are asking Jesus to save us from. Initial saving faith and repentance occur only once—when we ask Jesus to be the absolute Lord of our lives—but it is not the only time that these should be characteristic of who we are. Faith and genuine repentance are a daily posture of our heart in our relationship with God.

What two types of sorrow does Paul discuss in verse 10? How have you seen each of these?

What are the fruit of godly sorrow listed in verse 11? What fruit have you seen in your life or in the life of those around you that are a result of a godly perspective on sin?

When it comes to sin, what is the difference between recognition and repentance?

Have you experienced a time when you or someone you know was remorseful but not repentant? How could you tell the difference? What was the end result of that experience?

Why do we find repentance to be so difficult?

At what times in your life have you experienced genuine repentance? What steps did you take to turn to Christ and not continue to fall into that sin?

| READ PSALM 51.

Psalm 51 is an example of genuine repentance. This psalm was written soon after David had slept with Bathsheba and sent her husband to the front lines of battle to cover up his sin. David was king, and didn't want anyone to find out about his sin, so he continued to sin in order to avoid confronting his original sin (see 2 Samuel 10–12). Nathan the prophet approached David and rebuked him of his sin in 2 Samuel 12, but David did not admit his sin initially. Nathan's rebuke helped David realize his need to turn from his sin and back to obedience of God. Psalm 51 relays David's prayer of repentance to God, and characterizes the heart posture of genuine faith and repentance. God desires that we take up this posture in our own lives so that we may have intimacy with Him.

To what attributes of God does David stake his request for forgiveness? How had David experienced these characteristics of God before?

Which request of David's do you identify with the most? Why?

In verse 13, how did restoration change the way that David saw other people? How often do we avoid confronting our sin?

What can you do today to take up a posture of faith and genuine repentance?

The result of living out the posture of genuine repentance is an intimacy with the Father and an undeniable light for Christ that will shine from within us and pierce the darkness in the world.

CONTEMPLATION & APPLICATION

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to your life.

How can you remind yourself daily to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal sin and bring you to genuine repentance?

Think of David's prayer in Psalm 51. What attitudes of the heart do you need to develop that are like David's? What promises of God do you need to focus on to remind you that intimacy with God comes from a right relationship with Him?

PRAYER

Pray that the Lord would grant honesty and receptivity to the rebuke of sin in our lives.

COMMENTARY (additional background and /or explanation of the verses to help in understanding the biblical text)

| 2 CORINTHIANS 7

7:1. The promises of God are strong reasons for us to follow after holiness. We are called to seek to be holy, as God is holy. His grace and the moving of the Holy Spirit alone can purify us, but holiness should be the object of our prayers and intentions as well.

7:2-4. Paul addressed the concerns that many may have had after hearing some leaders in the community doubt his authority or his intention. Paul reminds them that he had wronged no one. On their past visits to Corinth, they had been careful to treat each person well, had spoken with honesty and integrity, and had sought God and genuine repentance in their own life. Paul also asserted that he had great care for them, and was rebuking them in love, not in haughty spirit. Paul wrote them a letter that was painful to read for their spiritual betterment and refinement, not for their harm.

7:5-9. Paul and Titus rejoiced in the response of the church at Corinth to their teaching. The church desired Paul to come and continue to teach them, which was a great encouragement to Paul. This indicated that they were being receptive to Paul's message, even though it was difficult. Rebuking of sin causes sorrow, but when it is godly sorrow and not worldly sorrow then it leads to salvation, as it is a characteristic of genuine repentance. They saw that Paul's rebuke was not directed from Paul personally, but was truth directly from Scripture that they needed to hear as to renew their obedience to Christ, despite the deteriorating morality in the culture around them.

7:10-14. Paul outlines genuine repentance and that which brings great sorrow over sin and leads to salvation. Faith and repentance coupled together lead to initial repentance, but there also is a need for continued faith and repentance as God restores and renews a believer in purity.

Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. Repentance, like faith, is an intellectual understanding that sin is wrong, an emotional approval of the teachings of Scripture regarding sin (a sorrow for sin and a hatred of it), and a personal decision to turn from it (a renouncing of sin and a decision of the will to forsake it and lead a life of obedience to Christ instead). Genuine repentance will always result in a changed life. However, we should never require that there be a period of time in which a person actually lives a changed life before we give assurance of forgiveness. Repentance is something that occurs in the heart and involves the whole person in a decision to turn from sin.

It also is important to realize that simply being sorrowful for one's actions does not constitute genuine repentance unless it is accompanied by a sincere decision to forsake sin that is being committed against God. Paul preached about "repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). A worldly sorrow may include being sorrowful for one's actions and fear of punishment, but no commitment to life change or renouncing of sin. Genuine repentance and faith that leads to salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit and is not something that we can conjure up for ourselves. Jesus invites us to come to Him and take up His yoke and learn from Him (Matthew 11:28-29). This means we are subject to His guidance and direction, being obedient to Him. If we are unwilling to make such a commitment, then we have not truly placed our trust in Him. Scripture frequently connects genuine repentance and faith (See Isaiah 55:6-7, Acts 20:21, Hebrews 6:1).

When Jesus encounters people personally throughout the Gospels, He requires them to turn from their sin before they come to follow Him (rich young ruler: Luke 18:18-30, Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the woman at the well (John 4:16), and Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). Preaching faith without repentance is only preaching half of the Gospel.

| PSALM 51

This Psalm was written by David just after he had seen Bathsheba bathing on her roof, laid with her and impregnated her, and sent her husband Uriah to the front lines of war to die to cover up his sin. David is described by God as a man after His own heart, yet we see his sin in full display. It is an encouragement to believers to know that when sin is forgiven it is truly forgotten and our intimate relationship with Him may be restored! Read 2 Samuel 10-12 to get the details of David and Bathsheba's story.

51:1-6. After realizing the error of his sin, David appealed first to the mercy of God, even before he mentions his sin. No matter the monstrosity of sin, God has infinite amounts of mercy to lavish upon those with repentant hearts. He asks God to blot out his transgressions - this word in

the original language is a judicial word. David realizes that he is guilty. He asks that his sin be wiped away and no record would appear against him, which is only possible through the mercy and grace of God. David was deeply sorrowful for his sin and committed to turn from it.

51:7-15. David asked God to clean him with hyssop, which was traditionally sprinkled into the water of purification and directly relates to the sprinkling of blood of Jesus in Hebrews 12:24. David asks God to not look upon his sin and to not remove the Holy Spirit from him. David knew that he had grieved the Holy Spirit by his sin, which had caused him to withdraw.

51:16-19. David recognizes that he cannot make satisfaction for sin, but that men despise what is broken but God does not. David knows that God alone can renew his spirit and redeem him through the forgiveness of his sin.

This Psalm is a psalm for the choir director. David's penitent heart was not to be a private meditation only, but a public service of song. Imagine if your sins and your confession of them were sung at FBC Collierville this Sunday. God is revealing to us the need to live humbly and honestly, accepting rebuke and confessing our sin so that we may live as children of God in intimacy with Him.