

## WHERE DOES GOD STAND ON REPENTANCE?

*“From that time Jesus began  
to preach and to say,  
“Repent, for the kingdom  
of heaven is at hand.” Mat 4:17*

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Throughout the Word of God, we find that repentance isn't an option but rather a requirement. However, what does repentance mean?

Repentance is defined as the recognition of past wrongs, then feeling sorrow and turning around to change our behavior. As a result, feeling sorrow implies we experience sadness, grief, and regret past thoughts or actions that offended God, thereby becoming remorseful and penitent.

Why is repentance a requirement and not simply an option?

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.”

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.”

Acts 26:20: “That they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.”

Rev 3:19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.”

The reason Jesus said in Luke 5:32, “I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

Obviously, repentance is a command to enter the presence of God.

The question to ask ourselves then is, “Am I truly repentant from the heart, or is my repentance only lip service?”

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Scripture leaves no doubt that repentance is necessary because we are all sinners from the moment we come into this world.

Are we given any excuse to forsake repentance?

Acts 17:30-31 says: "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."

In other words, Jesus came to teach us that we need to repent, and He provided the way to forgiveness through His death and resurrection.

After His resurrection, Jesus confirmed this in telling His apostles in Luke 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."

The reason also Paul in 1Thess 5:9 stated: "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Are we prepared for that day referred to in 1Thess 5:2, "For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night."?

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What does true repentance imply?

2Cor 7:9: “Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner.”

Clearly, God desires repentance from the heart and rejects superficial repentance. Why? Because true repentance generates in us the desire to change our ways and reject the temptations of the world. As a result, our hearts will desire to live each day to follow Christ and please God.

Here’s what scripture says about true repentance:

2Cor 7:10: “For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

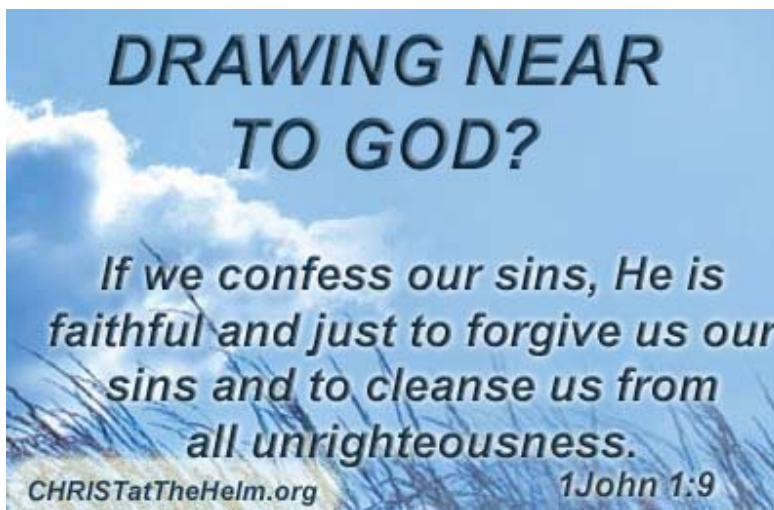
Ps 51:17: “The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.”

1Tim 6:12: “Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and *for which* you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

Is 57:15: “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose Name *is* Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

In light of this, have we repented from the heart to cause us to truly follow Christ?

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How should true repentance translate into our daily attitudes towards God?

Heb 6:1: "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God."

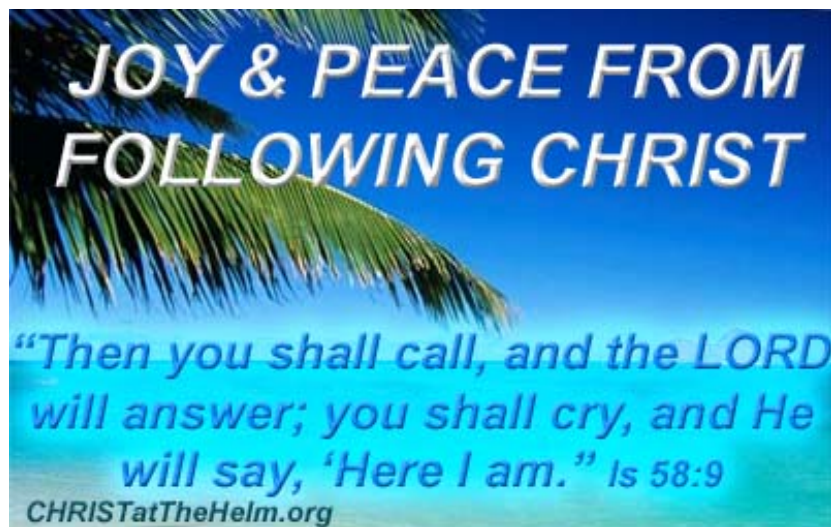
Philip 3:13-15: "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you."

James 4:7-8: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded."

2Chron 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 will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Have we set our hearts on following Christ, and seek to live according to His Word?

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What a joy to know that God is ever present in the lives of believers and followers of Christ. As such, what should we look forward to, if we are focused on serving God through Christ?

Eze 18:21-22: "If a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live."

Luke 15:7: "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."

Eph 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ."

Pr 16:7: "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

When we truly repent, God works mightily in our lives and guides us through all of life's challenges. As a result, our attitude should be to draw near to God through His Word, to keep our hearts in Christ Jesus.

As Jesus said in Mat 3:8, "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance," how evident is the presence of God in our life?

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# THE PURE WORD OF GOD!

*“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”*

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Pro 28:13

Forgiveness and mercy God gives to all who repent and surrender their lives to follow Christ. However, what happens if we take His mercy lightly and continue entertaining sin in our lives?

Rom 2:5-6: “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds.”

Rev 2:5: “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.”

Rev 3:3: “Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.”

It is obvious that we must reject sin that offends God, and keep our hearts pure through the Word of God as our guide, so we are not fooled and deceived by the world or even devious false teachers.

1Peter 5:8 warns us: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

Will we heed this wise command, reject sin and be anchored to God’s Word by faith?

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