

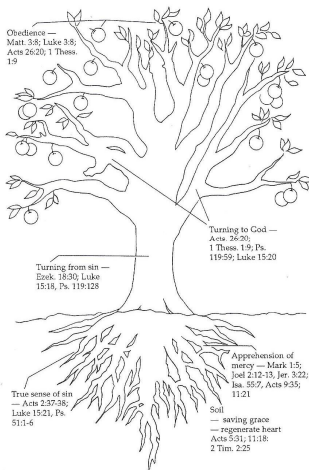
BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED – GOD GAVE US REPENTANCE (III)!

*Repentance unto life is a saving grace,
whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin,
and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,
doth with grief and hatred of his sin,
turn from it unto God, with full purpose of,
and endeavour after new obedience.*

**Repentance
is not a
supplement
to the
gospel
invitation;
it is
precisely
what
the gospel
demands.**

We continue to look at *true repentance*, using the Westminster Larger Catechism quoted above as a guide and the picture of the tree as an aid:

[3] THE TRUNK AND BRANCHES OF TRUE REPENTANCE.



Now, there are two New Testament Greek words that are being used for *repentance*. The *first* word means a change of mind. The *second* word means a turning. What this means is that whenever the New Testament writers say that someone has *repented*, what they are saying is that that person has made a "turning" in his life. Now, that "turning" is a "spiritual turning", a turning that starts from the heart. But it does not remain in the heart; it will flow out to the outer life. That is, the turning can be seen; it is visible.

It is, *first of all*, **A TURNING FROM SIN**. For *True Repentance* to take place there must be this turn *from sin*, 'with grief and hatred of it.'

There must be sorrow for sin. The Bible uses different words and terms to describe this, such as "mourning", "sorrowing", "indignation against sin", "beating the breast", "putting on sackcloth" and "plucking the hair".

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise, says David in **Psalm 51**. In *true repentance* of his sin, there is present in David this brokenness and sorrow over his sin.

There is no true repentance without sorrow but there can be sorrow without true repentance, for not all sorrow is an evidence of true repentance. Paul tells us that there is a sorrow after the world and a godly sorrow. True sorrow, godly sorrow is inward, not just outward.



Repentance

The heart will bleed for sin. True sorrow, godly sorrow is sorrow over all sins, whether the sins be scandalous or not. True and godly sorrow is sorrow over sin rather than over sin's punishment. The man will be sorrowful because it is a trespass against God, so that even if there is no devil to accuse, no hell to punish, we will still be very grieved, very sorry that we have done that evil. Not all will have the same degree of sorrow in repenting of their sins. But all will have sorrow. It is just like not all mothers-to-be have intense birth pangs when coming to deliver their babies, yet all will have birth pangs! However, it is true that the more bitterness we taste in sin, the more sweetness we will taste in Christ.

Besides *sorrow for sin*, there must also be *hatred of sin*. **Ezekiel 36:31** ~ *Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations.*" For a man who has *truly repented* of his sin, there will be this hatred of sin, this loathing of himself for having done that evil. It is true that Christ is never loved and longed for till sin is hated.

- *True, godly hatred for sin* is **UNIVERSAL**. You will hate sin in your whole person. You will hate all sin, no matter what forms or flavours it appears in.
- *True, godly hatred for sin* is **IMPLACABLE**. You cannot be reconciled to sin; there is no way you can agree to live together with sin.
- *True, godly hatred for sin* is **FERVENT**. You will oppose sin, both in yourselves and others. You cannot have a indifferent attitude towards sin, even if it is in others.

True Repentance first of all involves **A TURNING FROM SIN**, a turning that is accompanied by godly sorrow and true hatred of sin.

Besides **A TURNING FROM SIN**, there must also be **A TURNING TO GOD**. This aspect can be seen very clearly as we turn to **Luke 15:17-20**, the parable of the prodigal son. Here we see that he is not only convinced of his own sin and misery. Here we see that he is not only convinced of his father's mercy, that his father will receive him back if he returns. But he actually arose, left his riotous life and went back to his father. There is an *actual* turning to the father, there is an *actual* return to his father. This is *True Repentance*, an *actual* turning away from sin, and an *actual* turning to God.

Have you turned from your sins? Have you turned to God? Why not? **WEI En Yi**