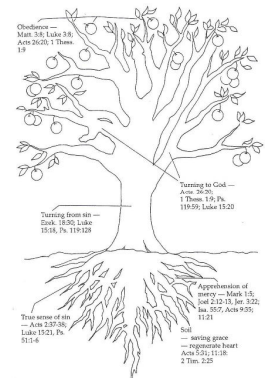


**BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED – GOD GAVE US REPENTANCE (II)!**

**[2] The Roots Of True Repentance.**

A tree without roots will not survive. A tree may look very healthy and beautiful, but if it has no roots, all you need is a big storm and the tree will be fallen to the ground the next day. Our tree of *True Repentance* has two big roots, which will suck up nutrients from the soil and nourish the tree.



The *first* root is **A TRUE SENSE OF HIS OWN SIN.** A man who has truly repented sees sin as it really is -- utterly sinful, absolutely filthy and abhorrent. But not just sin in general, but his sins as well. He sees his own sin as truly sinful, as truly filthy and totally abhorrent. As he comes face to face with God and His Law, and as he looks at his own sins, he feels the defilement and guilt of his sin, and feels it deeply. This is always the feelings, the experience of all God's people, in the past as well as in the present.

In **Psalm 130:3**, the Psalmist cries out, *"If you, LORD, should mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?"* The Psalmists could see the holiness of God, and the strict justice that God will apply to the life of man. And as he turns his eyes from beholding that to see his own sins, he sees how defiled he is, how sinful are his sin. Therefore, he cries out to God, *O Lord, who can stand?* He feels, and feels it deeply and feelingly, that no one, not even he himself, could stand before God.

In the parable of the prodigal son (**Luke 15:18-19**), when he finally came to himself, he said, *"I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son."* He feels his sin so much that he deems himself unworthy to be called the son of his father. He feels that what he has done is so terrible, is such a great evil, that he has forfeited all rights to be this man's son. He has a true sense of his sins.

This is one root of the tree of *true repentance* – a true sense of your own sin. May I ask -- *is this present in your life? Do you see, do you feel, your sin as what it really is, truly sinful and filthy and abhorrent?*

The *second* root is **AN APPREHENSION OF THE MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST.** A tree that only has one big root is unstable. It can fall off anytime. Thank God that

the tree of *true repentance* has two big roots. Without this second root (realisation that there is forgiveness and mercy of God in Christ), a man who only has a true sense of his sin will be driven to despair! Similarly, without the first root (a true sense of his own sins), the man will not truly appreciate and value God's mercy in Christ, treating God's forgiveness of sin as something very cheap. Therefore, both roots are crucial to the health and prosperity of this tree. In fact, the deeper these two roots have dung into the soil, the stronger the tree will be.

Look at Judas Iscariot (**Matthew 27:3-5**). Judas was remorseful. He returned the silver he had obtained for betraying Jesus, and he even said openly that he had sinned, he had betrayed innocent blood. Therefore in one sense, we can say that Judas had a true sense of his sin. But what did he do next? **Verse 5** tells us that he went and hanged himself! He was driven to despair, he felt he was beyond forgiveness, and he went to sin some more -- he murdered himself! Judas's tree of repentance only had one big root, and it finally fell flat down.

Now look at Peter (**Matthew 26:75**). Peter suddenly realised the terrible evil he had done. He had denied His Lord, the One whom He professed to love and ready to die with, and He had denied Him three times! At this time, he realised his sin, he had a true sense of his sin, and the Bible says, he went out, not to hang himself but to weep bitterly.



Later, when out fishing, when he realised that it was the Lord on the shore, Peter plunged into the sea and swam to Jesus. Why? He wanted to come to his Lord as soon as he can. Yes, Peter had sinned terribly but he knew that there is mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that if he turns to his Lord, Jesus will receive him and forgive him. So, he does not go and hang himself, he goes and throws himself at the feet of Jesus.

This is the second root of the tree of *true repentance* – apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ. My dear friends, turn from your sins and turn to the Lord, for the Lord is merciful and He delights to pardon sinners.

This is *repentance*. But have you *repented*?