

REPENTANCE: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL

Two Truths...

- All who repent and believe on Christ are forgiven of their past, present and _____ sins. (1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:14)
- All those whose sins have been forgiven are called to _____ and ask God for forgiveness when they sin. (1 Jn. 1:8-9).

Why Repent If I'm Already Forgiveness?

- God's _____ Forgiveness: Leads to eternal life and absolution from all legal guilt. (Acts 2:38; 3:19)
- God's _____ Forgiveness: Renews our *experience* of God's love and cleanses our guilty conscience. (Mt. 6:12)

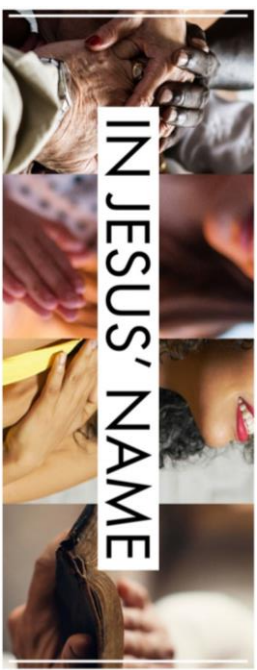
Vertical Repentance...

- Repentance is _____ and grieving with God about our sin.
 - We repent for *the sin itself*, not simply our behavior or its consequences. (1k. 6:43-45; Mt. 6:21)
- We _____ in God's grace and move forward. (1 Jn. 1:9)

Horizontal Repentance: The 7 A's of Confession...¹

1. **A** _____ everyone involved.
2. **A** _____ “if”, “but”, and “maybe”.
3. **A** _____ specifically.
4. **A** _____ the hurt.
5. **A** _____ the consequences.
6. **A** _____ your behavior.
7. **A** _____ for forgiveness (and allow time).

¹ Ken Sande, The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 126-133.



REPENTANCE: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL

Two Truths...

- All who repent and believe on Christ are forgiven of their past, present and _____ **future** _____ sins. (1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:14)
- All those whose sins have been forgiven are called to _____ **repent** _____ and ask God for forgiveness when they sin. (1 Jn. 1:8-9).

Why Repent If I'm Already Forgiveness?

- God's _____ **Judicial** _____ Forgiveness: Leads to eternal life and absolution from all legal guilt. (Acts 2:38; 3:19)
- God's _____ **Parental** _____ Forgiveness: Renews our *experience* of God's love and cleanses our guilty conscience. (Mt. 6:12)

Vertical Repentance...

- Repentance is _____ **agreeing** _____ and grieving with God about our sin.
 - We repent for *the sin itself*, not simply our behavior or its consequences. (1k. 6:43-45; Mt. 6:21)
- We _____ **rest** _____ in God's grace and move forward. (1 Jn. 1:9)

Horizontal Repentance: The 7 A's of Confession...¹

1. **Address** everyone involved.
2. **Avoid** “if”, “but”, and “maybe”.
3. **Admit** specifically.
4. **Acknowledge** the hurt.
5. **Accept** the consequences.
6. **Alter** your behavior.
7. **Ask** for forgiveness (and allow time).

¹ Ken Sande, The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 126-133.



REPENTANCE: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL

Great time at secret church! Last time we talked about prayer we said that there are different genres of prayer and we talked praising God. Today we are going to talk about repentance and confession.

Two Truths...

- All who repent and believe on Christ are forgiven of their past, present and future sins. (1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:14)

“For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.” (Heb. 10:14)

Imputed righteousness. Imparted righteousness. The slate has been wiped clean! Past, present, and future. And I emphasize future here because we tend to miss this. There is a dangerous tendency—even in the church—to think of God’s grace as something that forgives of all the sins of our past and give us a second chance to live right. And this may sound good, but it’s not. That’s probation. That’s bad news! And if our security is only as good as our future faithfulness to God, we are in huge trouble because every one of us will sin in some way before the sun goes down this evening—be it a thought, action attitude, or perhaps something we’ve left undone. If the gospel is really going to be good news, it can’t just include forgiveness of our past sins, we need forgiveness for all of our future sins! I can’t live the Christian life today if I know my salvation depends on my getting it right tomorrow. I need to know that if I sin tomorrow it’s already forgiven. And the good news of the Gospel is that it is!! “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 Jn. 2:1-2)

I don’t want to sin tomorrow, but if I do, I won’t be driven to despair bc...I know A Guy. The good news this morning is not that you get a second chance, it’s that when it comes to your salvation, it’s not up to chance. It’s up to the finished work of one Jesus of Nazareth—our hero, our champion, our substitute, our high priest “And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,” When Jesus said it is finished he meant it. If you have trusted in Christ, all your sin past present and future has been completely forgiven!

And you may say well isn’t that a dangerous thing to say? If people believe their future sin is forgiven, won’t they just sin more? And this is a fair question and it’s the exact question Paul responds to in Romans 6 after preaching about grace in Romans 5. “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?” (Rom. 6:1-2) The truth is that those who have been born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, don’t sin as much as they want to but much more than they want to. Those who are truly born again grieve their sin and are driven to repentance. Brother Micah—no sin. 1 Jn. 1:8-9 “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

But he didn’t read the next verse—or maybe not even the whole book. “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 Jn. 2:1-2)

- All those whose sins have been forgiven are called to repent and ask God for forgiveness when they sin. (1 Jn. 1:8-9).

See it in Mt. 6:12, “Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Notice that Jesus’ prayer starts by addressing God as Father. This is a prayer for believers to pray, not just unbelievers to get saved. And so what we see here, among a variety of other places in the NT, is a call for confess their sin, asking forgiveness, repentance, to be a regular part of the Christian life. And it’s something that we see all over the pages of Scripture. So we need to make sure we get this right.

Notice when we’re confessing, we’re going to God, not a priest. You only need one priest and he came to you. Something you do, not something someone else does for you. What is repentance? At its core, repentance is acknowledging our sin for the rebellion and wickedness and idolatry that it is and turning from that sin to God. It’s a recognition and rejection of sin and a reorientation towards Christ and his righteousness. I want to show you a few pictures of this 2 in the OT 2 in the NT and I want you to read carefully and see the consistent theme of turning from something and to something and experiencing the blessing. See it first in...

(Jer. 4:1-2) “If you return, O Israel, declares the LORD, to me you should return. If you remove your detestable things from my presence, and do not waver...and if you swear, ‘As the LORD lives,’ in truth, in justice, and in righteousness, then nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.”

(Jer 35:15) “I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, ‘Turn now every one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to you and your fathers.’ But you did not incline your ear or listen to me.

Acts 26:19-20, Paul on trial “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.”

(Revelation 2:4-5) But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

So see this pattern of turning from and turning to rejection and reorientation...And notice that repentance is not feeling bad about something we did. Mt. 27 says Judas felt extremely guilty that he betrayed Jesus to the point where he hanged himself. It’s not just saying I’m sorry. When we’re repenting, we’re coming before God and telling the truth about what we’ve done—or not done that we should have done—and we’re making a concerned effort in the power of the Spirit to turn away from that sin and turn to back to Christ. And when we do that the Father forgives us. Which leads us to this question...if I’ve already been forgiven of all of my sin for all time, why do I need to keep asking for forgiveness? Why repent if I’m already forgiven? And it’s a good question...and to answers that we need to realize that there are 2 types of forgiveness God gives...

Why Repent If I’m Already Forgiven?

- God’s Judicial Forgiveness: Leads to eternal life and absolution from all legal guilt. (Acts 2:38; 3:19) This is the forgiveness that we receive when we first believe—when we get saved. It’s a forgiveness that leads to salvation “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) Judicial forgiveness is only offered once and that’s when we call on Christ and repent of our sin and trust in God. And when we do our sin debt for all time is cancelled, and our guilt removed. And we experience a change in status. We go from being dead to being alive. From inheriting wrath to inheriting the world! From enemies of God to being sons and daughters of God.

And yet simply because we've been born again to eternal life doesn't mean that repentance becomes something of the past. Because while we've been acquitted of our guilt through God's judicial forgiveness, because we're still sinners, in this life we'll be in constant need of...

- God's Parental Forgiveness: Renews our *experience* of God's love and cleanses our guilty conscience.

So what's in view here is not the beginning of relationship with God but mending or renewal of the relationship with God we already have. You child sins against you and asks for forgiveness. Ok, you can be my child again. You forgive them so that we can experience the joy and intimacy family love.

In the same way, this is not a repentance that leads to salvation. This is repentance *that flows from salvation* and a desire to renew our intimacy with and experience of God. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another. (1 Jn. 1:7) When we sin that fellowship is disrupted—and repentance brings us back into the experience of God's blessing.

Guaranteed formula for blessing in your life—repent. It always leads to blessing. Ps. 32:3-7 "For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance." Repentance frees us to once again enjoy the relationship with God that saved us for in the first place.

So...Judicial forgiveness offered one time when we repent and believe. Parental Forgiveness is something God grants us continually as we come humbly to God as children seeking relational restoration to our Father. Now we've set up a framework for repentance and I want us to close this morning by looking at practicing repentance. What does incorporating repentance in to the regular rhythm of our lives look like. Two dimensions...

Vertical Repentance...

It's crucial that we realize that all sin is against God. Some sin is against man, but all sin is against God. In fact when David sleeps with Bathsheba and engineers her husband's death, when David repents in Ps. 51:4 he says, "Against you and you only have I sinned." Excuse me? Of course he's sinned against them, but he realizes that all horizontal sin is first and always vertical sin. If you make a nasty comment to your co-worker you have sinned against two people. And both needs to be addressed. So we start with asking God's forgiveness—this is vertical.

- Repentance is agreeing and grieving with God about our sin.—Should have included turning in that. Acknowledging our guilt before God. And acknowledging it as the wickedness and rebellion that it is. Bonhoeffer, "Repentance is ultimate honesty." It's calling a spade a spade. And this should be accompanied with a degree of grief and remorse. Remember sin is against a person not a law code. Keller "legalistic remorse says I broke God's rules. Genuine repentance says I broke God's heart." Eph. 4:30 says we grieve the Spirit! Our heart should break for our sin! We live in society that takes such a causal approach to sin. Does your heart break? Or do you just remind yourself that no one's perfect? This may be one area of repentance. And...

- We repent for *the sin itself*, not simply our behavior or its consequences. (Lk. 6:43-45; Mt. 6:21) This is the difference between apologizing and repenting. The world apologizes. Apologizing is saying sorry for your behavior. Repentance is expressing remorse over the sin that caused it. Sinful behaviors are always caused by sinful hearts. Lk 6:43, 5⁴"For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit...the good person out of the good treasure in his heart produces good, and the evil person out of this evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." M6. 6:21 where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. So repentance is not ultimately addressing behavior but the sin that caused it—it's identifying the bad treasure! If I yelled at Rebecca.

- We rest in God's grace and move forward. (1 Jn. 1:9)

Can't forgive yourself! This is huge for repetitive sin. Rom. 2:4, "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance." God's kindness leads you to repentance! We don't repent and hope God will be kind, if we repent it's because he's been kind. He's led us to repentance because he loves us. So what we mean is that the Holy Spirit produced repentance in my heart.

Horizontal Repentance: The 7 A's of Confession...¹

1. **Address** everyone involved.
Zacchaeus principle. Lk. 19:8 "Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." Those affected by my sin should be affected by my repentance.
2. **Avoid** "if", "but", and "maybe".
3. **Admit** specifically.
4. **Acknowledge** the hurt.
5. **Accept** the consequences.
6. **Alter** your behavior.
7. **Ask** for forgiveness (and allow time).

Time of confession.

¹Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 126-133.