

Repent and Come Unto Christ

Oak Grove Priesthood and Men's Retreat
January 2023

What is Repentance?

- TURN FROM SIN
- John the Baptizer (Matt 3:27-28) *“And in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”*
- “Repent” in Hebrew is “teshuba” from the root word “shub”, a verb meaning *“to turn”*
- The Greek words in the New Testament used for repent and repentance are usually translated to mean a change in the heart and mind
- TURN TO GOD

What is Repentance?

- Repentance is my faith in action...faith at work in my life
- Repentance is the catalyst that engages the power of Christ's atonement to restore us to life
- Repentance glorifies our Father and His Christ by our rightful response to the urging of His Holy Spirit.

“there is no end to my works, neither to my words; for this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality, and eternal life of man” (DC 22:23b)

What is Repentance?

- Repentance is our rightful response to the sacrificial gift of our Father in the form of the Son of God.

“...he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they will hearken unto his voice; He suffereth the pains of all men: yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women and children, who belong to the family of Adam. He suffereth this, that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. He commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they can not be saved in the kingdom of God” (2N 6:45-48)

What is Repentance?

- When I'm lost, repentance is the first step back towards home, toward the waiting arms of our Savior.
- John the Baptizer's words command us to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance"this command comes to life in us as true repentance brings us to gain insight into, and to experience, the heart and mind of God.

What is Repentance?

- *“The root meaning of the word repentance is rethinking, or thinking again; Christian repentance is ceasing to think as men have thought and thinking again in the way that God thinks...Repentance is rethinking of the kind that results in reliving, in changing ideals and purposes, and in growing righteousness”* (FH Edwards)
- Jesus’ parable of the prodigal (Luke 15:11-32); the Father’s mind, and two sons needing repentance

What is Repentance?

In true repentance we take God's part against ourselves. We stop asking "What will my sin bring to me?" and start asking "What does my sin mean to God?"

"The way of righteousness is the way of truth"

(A Oakman)

Do We Need Repentance?

Do We Need Repentance?

- Sin becomes deeply ingrained in me. Judging, defensiveness, angry thoughts and words....these thinking and feeling processes can become “hard-wired” into my persona.
- My nature is what Paul describes in Rom 7:26; what I need he describes in Rom 12:1-2

Do We Need Repentance?

- Death in Sin or Life in Him?

“Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”

(Ezek 33:10-11)

Do We Need Repentance?

- *“And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law; every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God; yea, infinite and eternal; and thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; This being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance, is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore, only unto him that has faith unto repentance, is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption” (Alma 16:215-217)*

Do We Need Repentance?

- There is an adversary!

“O, my beloved brethren, turn away from your sins; shake off the chains of him that would bind you fast; Come unto that God who is the rock of your salvation” (2Nephi 6:89-90)

Do We Need Repentance?

“We are made in the image of God and all of us imitate Him. We play God to ourselves. We set ourselves up as our own lords in the imagination of our hearts. We carve out a future for ourselves that exists only in our own imagination, then we have the colossal cheek to turn and use every gift God has given us to realize what we imagined. If we’re not committing that sin right now we are about to...and if we’re not about to commit that sin we are repenting from it!” (A Oakman)

Do We Need Repentance?

“for they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; they seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol” (DC 1:3d-3e)

Do We Need Repentance?

“We are selves...a gift of God given in creation. Being selves we have become self-centered. It is not wrong to be a self; it is wrong to be self-centered. There is a freedom of self-determination that is utter bondage. This is the freedom of man to do as he pleases, but this freedom is simply man’s power to destroy himself. There is a bondage that is perfect freedom, and this is the bondage of love. This means basically that the self which determines itself cannot lift itself off itself as center. This lifting of self from itself as center must be done by power that is outside of self. The love of God disclosed in Jesus is the only power by which this can be done.” (A Oakman)

- The Repentance Process

The Repentance Process

- Repent and Come Unto Christ!

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6)

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Rev 3:20)

The Repentance Process

- Right relations between God and man have been disrupted by sin. God has solved that problem for us in the gift of our Savior. It is by the choice to repent that we accept and participate in God's solution to our state of sin, which is enmity to God, light and life.

“Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 1:73)

The Repentance Process

- Humility is integral to the repentance process

“And now because ye are compelled to be humble, blessed are ye; for a man sometimes, if he is compelled to be humbled, seeketh repentance”

(Alma 16:134)

The Repentance Process

- We must come unto Christ with truth in our hearts and in full purpose of heart

“But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God; for salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Mosiah 1:108)

The Repentance Process

- Repentance requires action on my part, the application of the agency God gave me to turn toward Him
- God won't do it for us, but He is more than willing to help us

“Nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them, saith the Lord God, if they will repent and come unto me; for mine arm is lengthened out all the day long, saith the Lord God of hosts” (2 Nephi 12:41)

The Repentance Process

- “Our Father does not seek to convict us of sin to condemn us, but to save us....repentance...is only possible as God shall go with us every step of the way, opening our eyes to clear vision and steeling our souls to honor and courage” (A Oakman)

“Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men; for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith, Repent, and I will receive you” (Alma 3:57)

The Repentance Process

- True repentance is the abandonment of all our demands for our own self-centered way, to quit the rebellion against God's way in my life. I have to decide to trust in His ways. Its more than acceptance of His ways, it is a self-commitment to TURN to Him. Repentance is dependence on God and His promises.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”

(Matthew 6:21)

Repentance Outcomes

Repentance Outcomes

- The act of our agency to repent seals all the covenant promises of God in our lives:

“And the first-fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling of the commandments bringeth remission of sins; and the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart, cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God” (Moroni 8:29)

Repentance Outcomes

- As God has promised, repentance brings an indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives that leads us to a longing and disposition to work toward outcomes fit for His Kingdom:
- *“...the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually”*
(Mosiah 3:3)

Repentance Outcomes

- Repentance moves me from self-indulgent to self-sacrificing; Jesus is the ultimate example *“not my will but thine be done”*
- Repentance is the response that opens the way for us to experience life as God has intended. Jesus said: *“...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”*
- We are called by God to serve Him. We are here to join Him in the purpose of building His Kingdom. Repentance keeps us in touch with our calling as it invites the daily leading of His Spirit

Preach Repentance

Preach Repentance

“...thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, and ye are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:45-47)

“Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ: teach them to humble themselves, and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Alma 17:66)

Preach Repentance

“...this is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me... and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me” (3 Nephi 5:32-33)

“I have given unto you another law and commandment; wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God”

(Genesis 6:59)

Preach Repentance

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days, in crying repentance unto this people, and bring save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!”

(DC 16:3f)

“Yea, and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God, to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy” (Alma 15:61)

Repentance Questions

- Is there ever an end to the need for repentance in this life? Jesus tells us “...*to be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect*”
- Where will repentance lead you in your calling and ministry?
- What will repentance require of you?

My Prayer for You and Me

- Alma 10:27-30