

# A Heart of Repentance

A heart of repentance along with a sincere desire for forgiveness is what is required to live the life God intended for each one of us.

## Introduction

We have been sharing messages about heart attitudes. These are attitudes we must have in our hearts as well as our minds as we live our lives following Jesus. One of the most important heart attitudes we must have as Christians is a heart of repentance.

None of us are perfect. We all make mistakes. We all do things that require forgiveness from time to time. The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 3:23

### Romans 3:23

(23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

One of the biggest differences between Christians and non-Christians is the heart of repentance. We cannot move forward in life without atoning for our past mistakes and sins. Fortunately, Jesus has already paid the price for all our sins, but we must repent from those ways. Jesus is recorded in Mark 1:15 saying:

### Mark 1:15

(15) "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Repentance is a complete turnaround. When we repent, we see our sin and leave it behind as we turn toward Jesus. There are two things to understand about repentance and asking Jesus to forgive us and cleanse us from our sins. It is never too late to repent and ask for Jesus' forgiveness and we still must endure the consequences of our sins or actions.

We will apply two examples from the Bible to our lives as we talk about a heart of repentance.

## King David

King David wrote many of the psalms and is known as the man after God's own heart. He was anointed king over Israel at a young age and showed great integrity as he served in the house of King Saul. David spent many years running and hiding from King Saul who was trying to kill him out of jealousy. But David's integrity and love for God kept him from taking any action against Saul.

However, King David was not perfect. We read about King David sinning with Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11:1-5.

### 2 Samuel 11:1-5

(1) In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. (2) One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, (3)



and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." (4) Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. (5) The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

We see David sinned greatly. He committed adultery with the wife of one of his soldiers who was off at war. If you continue reading you will read that David tried to cover up his sin by having Bathsheba's husband brought back home so the adultery could be covered up. When that did not work David then arranged for Bathsheba's husband to be killed in battle.

In the next chapter of 2 Samuel, we read that the Prophet Nathan came to David and rebuked him. Nathan prophesies in 2 Samuel 12:7-10

#### 2 Samuel 12:7-10

(7) Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. (8) I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. (9) Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. (10) Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'

It was not too late for David though. The Lord will always accept a heart of repentance. David knew what he had done was wrong. He had sinned greatly, and he turned away from his sin and drew close to the Lord. This is what David said in 2 Samuel 12:13-14:

#### 2 Samuel 12:13-14

(13) Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. (14) But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD, the son born to you will die."

It is Never too late to repent and turn to the Lord. It does not matter how many times you fall into sin a repentant heart will always be welcomed by Jesus and forgiveness is given. The sin does not matter, it is the heart that matters, and a heart of repentance will always be forgiven.

There are often consequences that still happen. If we continue reading this passage, we read that the son born to Bathsheba because of David's sin dies after being sick for 7 days. This entire time David spent in prayer pleading for the life of his son. The consequences of David's sin still happened. His son died.

Our sins will be forgiven, but we often must still endure the consequences for them.

#### The Thief on the Cross

Another passage of scripture shows that it is never too late to repent and ask the Lord for forgiveness and to follow him. We read about the crucifixion of Jesus in Luke 23. An often-overlooked part of that



scripture is the two thieves that were crucified on either side of Jesus. While the three were hanging on those Roman crosses, one of the thieves mocked Jesus along with the crowd. The other thief did not. He showed a heart of repentance. Let us read Luke 23:32-33:

Luke 23:32-33

(32) Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. (33) When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

These two had sinned greatly against the people and deserved death for their crimes. The Romans were carrying out that death sentence alongside Jesus. Let us read what these two criminals said in Luke 23:39-43.

Luke 23:39-43

(39) One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" (40) But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? (41) We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." (42) Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." (43) Jesus answered him, **"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."**

It is never too late to have a heart of repentance. We have up until the very last moment to repent from the sins we have committed and turn to Jesus. If your heart is repentant and you are sincere in your request for forgiveness, Jesus will forgive you of all your sins, cleanse you, and present you to our Father in Heaven as a son or daughter.

The consequences still happened. Both thieves died on Roman crosses alongside Jesus. One followed Jesus into Heaven for eternity while the other will spend eternity apart from God in Hell being tormented by the enemy of our souls.

### Jesus is Faithful to Forgive

Do not worry that your sin cannot be forgiven. If you have a heart of repentance and are sincere in your request for forgiveness, Jesus will forgive you. The Apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 1:6:

Philippians 1:6

(6) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

God created you for a purpose. He began a good work in you and has a plan and a purpose for your life. He will carry out that plan and purpose if you turn to him with a repentant heart and a sincere desire for forgiveness.

Trust the Lord to be there and ready to raise you up out of your sin and cleanse you, making you presentable for eternity in Heaven.



## Conclusion

A repentant heart along with a sincere desire for forgiveness is what is required to live the life God intended for each one of us. They are also required to spend eternity in Heaven.

We all make mistakes. No one is perfect and without sin. God has created a path for us to follow to be redeemed by him. We must repent from our sins and turn to Jesus for forgiveness. It is never too late to repent for our sins and turn to Jesus. However, we may still have to pay the consequences of our mistakes and sins. The good news is Jesus is right there with us. He guides us through those times, and we grow because of them.

We encourage you to have a heart of repentance and turn to Jesus always.

