

God's call to true REPENTANCE, Part 2



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

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Summary: *Jesus said if we don't repent, we will perish (Luke 13:5). Have you truly repented in a godly way? Do you let other people repent and move on? Or do you feel some people's sins are too bad for God or you to forgive? Can we forgive someone who sins against us over and over in one day and yet claims repentance each time and seeks our forgiveness? What did Jesus say? Who was the first person whom Jesus revealed himself to as the promised Messiah? Who was the first to see the risen Christ? If you were God, would you have forgiven terribly wicked King Ahab and king Manasseh? This sermon is as much about forgiving repentant people as it is about repenting, no matter the horror of your sins.*

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Hello everyone. This is part 2 to the topic of Godly repentance and how God is calling his people to repent, especially in these end times. **I urge you to check out part 1 first, as it lays the vital foundation.**

Repentance is so much more than the simple 2 lines or so that some ministers end their sermons with: "Lord, I repent of my sins and I make Jesus the Lord of my life. Amen." So that person is supposedly "born again".

Repentance is more than the simple words "Lord, I repent". It starts there, but goes so much deeper.

Frankly, when we properly repent, we should have the attitude that I'm where I am and alive because of God's grace. Looking at poor sinners who are stuck in sin, we might say "There go I, but by the grace of God. But God's grace is greater than my sins, so I look ahead to the resurrection and meeting my Savior face to face."

So that's why I say I'm a repentant reforming sinner saved by God's grace – because we ALL still fall short of the mark from time to time. I admit, I also do still fail, slip up, miss the mark, fall short – I still sin. But Paul said something similar definitely in Romans 7:15-20, and look at this too:

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

"For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain**".

In recent months as I **practice my “constant contact” program**, I’m finding myself stronger and walking much more in the spirit. The thoughts of the flesh don’t pop up nearly as much. I’ll discuss it briefly in this message, but be sure to listen to my audio **sermon on “Constant Contact”**. When you make the short prayer to God many times a day, even use a scripture to help you combat temptations as even Jesus did.

Please listen to Part 1 of God's call to Repentance before this one. It lays the foundation.

One thing I’m learning, is that when we truly repent, and see WE need forgiveness, we also learn to forgive others who repent, and to forgive ourselves too, very hard for many of us to do. But as we see that WE need forgiveness, hopefully that helps us be forgiving of others. And when people have to forgive you, painful as it can be, everyone learns qualities of God and his mercy.

Repeated Sin... can that be forgiven?

We also have to get rid of the notion that a person who sins again hasn't really repented – and therefore must not be forgiven – especially if they commit the same sin again. The recidivism rate for sin is high, right?

Remember what Yeshua/Jesus says about someone who repents but also sins frequently, asking your forgiveness. After all, the Son of God and our Father in heaven forgive us over and over and over too – if you’re honest with yourself.

Luke 17:3-4

“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. 4 **And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in A DAY returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him.**”

Let's be honest. Which of us would forgive the same person, coming back to us seven times in one day, repenting to us and asking forgiveness? No, we'd not believe there was any true repentance, because WE understand repentance should have fruits showing the repentance is real, as John the Baptist even said to the Pharisees (Matthew 3:8).

But what did Jesus just say?

Sure, our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak – so we keep sinning. We have the carnal old heart that hates God's way, is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). But now that we also have the new heart from God, we must believe our new heart is vastly different. Jeremiah 17:9 does not apply to your new heart; just to your old nature. The new heart from God is new and different. It **LOVES** God's way and wants to obey. These 2 natures clash as you can read in **Gal. 5:16-25**, especially v 17. The one we constantly feed and strengthen will dominate. Hence the Constant Contact program I'll describe briefly and in another message.

And we're all so good at dismissing someone's repentance as if we're they're judge (read Rom 14:10-13) or can read their hearts. We also look at how **BAD** their sin was and so we ask, “how could his repentance be for real?” Remember not to judge your brother like that.

WHY we must Repent

Anyway, as Jesus said in **Luke 13:1-5**, if we don't repent, we will all likewise perish! We must repent of what we ARE as well as of what we have done wrong. What we ARE propels what we do. Liars lie. Lustful, even perverted people, commit adulteries and other sexual atrocities. Sinners sin. Worrywarts lack faith, and worrying is a sin too. We come to realize we have to admit what we ARE that made us do that horrible sin. It's so much harder to say in prayer or to anyone: "I AM such a gossip. I am such a lustful person".

When we repent of what we ARE, we also appreciate the song Amazing Grace more -- "**...who saved a WRETCH like me...**". Compared to God, that's what we all are. We come to see the fleshly, carnal side of ourselves that way.

JAR OF ASHES I had (Story on the audio/video). This is "WHY" we need this sermon: without true repentance, we will all perish and end up as ashes (Mal 4:3). And without deep repentance, we'll not experience the JOY of God's forgiveness, the joy of His acceptance allowing us entrance into eternal life and back into his presence.

Don't put off deeply repenting and seeking after God. I remember when I was 17. (Full story of former classmate is in the video version). Rose Parade 1971, he was out of money and wanted to buy a hotdog, so I paid for one and gave it to him. We got to talking about the way he was headed. He said: "I know I need to repent, but I also know prophecy – and I'll repent at the last minute, or the last hour". But he died long ago in a drug related death. Don't let that be your story. **Remember Joel 2:15-16 -- whatever you're doing, stop and go repent, remember?**

REPENTANCE is beautiful to God

Repentance is beautiful to God, whatever your sins are. So he wants everyone, no matter how bad they've been, to repent. God even leaves a blessing afterwards (Joel 2:18-27).

2 Peter 3:9 World English Bible

"The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness; but is patient with us, **not wishing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance.**"

Not all of us think like God. If someone was super bad, let's admit it: we sometimes really don't want those kind to repent and be forgiven by our kind God and have them sit next to us in church! We want them blasted off the planet. Right now. It's like the "**Jonah syndrome**" with Nineveh. Jonah did not want them to repent because he knew God was merciful. Remember?

TEST: would any of you want Stalin or Hitler or a serial killer or sex addict to repent and be forgiven after all they've done and come to your Passover service? Think hard and long about that. Check your heart. God wants nobody to perish. Nobody means nobody.

So again: Repenting means to feel godly sorrow about our sins, confess them, ask for forgiveness in the blood of Jesus Christ – and then we must be sure we start to change by the Holy Spirit and turn back to God. Faith and obedience to God's way becomes our way. We don't want to keep sinning as our way of life anymore, though we all still stumble and slip up from time to time. When we repent our hearts are torn asunder (**Joel 2:12-13**) and we seek God with everything we've got. *Our lives change – to a life of faith and obedience. There's a rending of the heart.*

Let me hasten to add – some people are by nature more emotional than others. I am. It's easier for me to shed tears than a non-emotional person. So let's not judge a non-emotional person as one who has not repented just because they're not "feeling it" as deeply as you might, or as you think they should.

I believe included in godly repentance, especially prior to water immersion (baptism), is an acknowledgement and confession that Yeshua Messiah/Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died for the sins of the world, including yours and my sins. We also believe and know He was raised from the dead by our Father, and that the resurrection Jesus Christ is our life from now on as Paul explains in Gal 2:20/ Col 3:3-4.

*And so we feel completely torn up when we let Him and our Father down, in sin. If especially the big sins are happening or have happened NOW – we simply may not have repented enough of those. So we're called to go repent for real, DEEPLY. I've been super focused on this now for many months because ***I think it IS easy to repent casually in prayer, maybe even daily, if we're not on our toes.*** "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" – and we leave it at that. We may find ourselves thinking we've repented, but maybe not for real or deeply. So be sure your repentance is for real and deep.*

"Such WERE some of you"

Something we talked about last time: Whatever your sinful problems are, do the **righteous opposites now. Ephesians 4:20-32** – if you steal, give money away instead. If you're an angry person, try to find out why, then seek God's kindness in your life for others. *Find your main areas of weakness and discover the righteous opposite, then focus on that along with scriptures, asking Yeshua to live that out in you.*

We also covered last time how we *all* STILL occasionally sin, and that does NOT mean that we did not fully repent. Paul said HE still sinned. He says it twice in Romans 7:15-20. Are you better than Paul? Even ministers have weaknesses and they lust too sometimes, or lose their patience and temper. I wish more ministers would be like Paul and admit they are still fighting sin. Some preachers do admit that and that's admirable.

As long as we have our carnal human nature we will sometimes slip up in sin and every now and again, maybe even a disastrous huge sin. It doesn't mean you're out of the kingdom. We'll look at David's repentances shortly after TWO huge sins of his.

With deep repentance, our past should be being cleaned up until were new. After listing in **1 Cor. 6:9-11** a description of those who will not, cannot, be in God's kingdom, Paul goes on to say ***"Such WERE some of you. But you are washed, sanctified (set apart as holy) and justified (made right with God)."***

So though we repent of what we ARE, when we repent – let's also be encouraged that **GOD doesn't continue to see us that old way after repentance.** Neither should WE. "Such WERE some of you." He no longer sees us as liars, adulterers, drunkards. But we must be on alert to keep those sins from coming back – as they surely can – if we slack up.

Remember, there is more JOY in heaven when one terrible sinner repents than the way heaven feels about 99 righteous persons (**Luke 15:7, 10**) "who need no repentance".

Ponder that and put yourself into that statement.

Here are a couple more things to be aware of as we evaluate our level of repentance.

“That’s just The WAY I AM”

- **AVOID the “That’s just the way I am” excuse** to not really be willing to fully repent or change. I think more of us think this way than we might first think.

So we say, “I’m Jewish. You know what Jews are like. Or, I’m German. I’m Italian, or French... and that’s just the way I AM. I’m direct and sometimes harsh. That’s just the way I am. Don’t expect me to change that. It’s in my DNA.”

Or, “I like to drink. So sometimes I get drunk”.

Or people say, “I love women. So that’s the way I am”.

WHAAAT? When we’re baptized, we are giving up everything contrary to righteousness. We’ve unconditionally surrendered everything in our lives to Jesus now as LORD of our lives in every single area.

What is your “That’s just the way I am” excuse? Messy person. Lazy? Do any of you women like to show off your body sexually to entice men? Impatient? Hot tempered? Unkind to people who don’t serve you fast enough?

Part of repentance is a commitment to turn around, to overcome everything unlike God. I’ve actually had people ask me if they could keep this or that little sin. But that to me means they have not really repented. Sure, there are more grievous sins than others, there are the sins unto death and the ones that are not unto death – but all sins are serious.

So they ask: “Do I really have to totally give up everything I enjoy? Do I have to give up alcohol, or women, or shrimp/lobster? Or my fierce temper? That’s who and what I am. It’s just a little thing. Can’t I keep something?”

I don’t baptize people like that. They haven’t fully repented yet.

That would be like baptizing/immersing someone but letting them keep their elbow up out of the water. We must surrender EVERYTHING contrary to God’s nature. We totally immerse your body symbolic of total burial.

Another area to be aware of is the tendency of some not to allow someone we deem really bad, to repent. So some even claim he/she is totally “DISGRACED” forever. The “World” does that a lot. “How can so-and-so possibly ever be any good after all he or she’s done? They’re disgraced!”

Disgraced? Really? Those people who say that have not read **Romans 5:20-21** and are setting up a standard that will be used against them (Matt. 7:2).

Romans 5:20b ‘...where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.’ Don’t ever refer to a repentant and converting child of God as “disgraced.” There’s more than enough grace for him or her too. (I have sermons on grace/favor.)

REAL change is expected, though we all will also still stumble in sin.

God loves true repentance. He loves restoring relationship with us

No matter how bad your sin was, no matter how bad of a person you've been (repenting of what you ARE), **God REJOICES over your repentance. Like the Father of the Prodigal son in Luke 15:17-24.** *To the "good guys" watching this, something in our heart sometimes would prefer that the prodigal son types who are coming home would come home to a lashing instead of a feast, for all the trouble they caused.*

But we have to absorb this truth: God and his holy angels celebrate when we repent (Luke 15:7) MORE than the way they feel over righteous people needing no repentance. He is focused on our repentance more than the atrocious sins we did. Remember this!

See the basis of Luke 15's favorite stories: Jesus was hanging out with undesirable sinners (Luke 15:1). There may be hope yet for people like you and me.

God forgives us. **Sometimes it's harder to forgive ourselves**, especially when our deeds so deeply and badly hurt people. *OR, if we see God's people not forgiving us easily, then it's very hard to forgive ourselves. So it's so important we be a very forgiving people.*

GODLY SORROW VS WORLDLY REPENTANCE

Repentance goes way beyond confession and asking forgiveness. It includes, must include, humbling and then changing and turning from our evil way. Worldly sorrow in repentance is not intent on changing, on turning around – it's just regret and remorse with no real change happening. As always, this applies to us all, even me. Let's avoid worldly sorrow.

Certainly the sinner of 1 Cor. 5 who had to be put out of the church was doing awful things. But he repented and the whole church did too, as they had some things wrong too. We read of their repentance in **2 Cor. 7**, and also in 2 Cor 2 where Paul tells them to forgive the man and bring him back into fellowship.

But my point is: IF you've done some pretty awful things, beyond the ordinary sins, don't think you're not forgivable by God. Don't think you can't repent.

GODLY SORROW DEFINED

2 Corinthians 7:9-11

"Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. **For you were made sorry in a godly manner**, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the **sorrow of the world produces death.**

11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What **diligence** it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what **fear**, what **vehement desire**, what **zeal**, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 NEW Century Version

9 "Now I am happy, not because you were made sad, but because your **sorrow made you change your lives [repentance]**. You became sad in the way God wanted you to, so you were not hurt by us in any way.

10 The kind of sorrow God wants makes people change their hearts and lives. This leads to salvation, and you cannot be sorry for that. *But the kind of sorrow the world has brings death.*"

That's interesting, and yet at the **end of 2 Corinthians 12**, Paul tells them some in their congregation were still unrepentant. After saying that he hoped things would be different when he came to Corinth again, he says this:

2 Corinthians 12:21

"Lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have NOT repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced."

So when you pray in repentance, pray that God grants you true, deep, godly repentance too and not just remorse, like Esau. *He sought the blessing even with tears, but it wasn't for the real kind of repentance. (Hebrews 12:14-17).*

Too Evil for God to forgive?

Can one ever be too evil for God to lead to repentance and to forgive?

Remember 2 Peter 3:9 – God wants everyone to repent, no one to perish. (Some WILL perish, but God's dream is to save as many as possible – even the really, really bad ones.)

Some of you may not even bother to repent because you figure it's no use; you've been too bad. Hey—the **Prodigal son story** at the end of Luke 15. He was pretty bad. ***"God can't possibly love me, or want me, or have any use for me, nor want to forgive me", you might think.*** The Prodigal planned to say, "I am no longer worthy to be your son" (Luke 15:18-19). Father never even let him get that far in his planned elevator speech.

I've been there too. Maybe even your own family wants nothing to do with you. You're hurting. You want to be different, you want to change, but you feel you've done too many overboard sins, beyond the pale. And you reason, "Even if GOD would accept me, **his people – his righteous church people** –won't want me around. They wouldn't even want me to be seen or associated with them! They don't want my kind around."

I've heard too many say that over the years. Sad.

But if we're honest with scripture, *it's actually the really bad ones God wants to lead to repentance and encourage them to reform. Perhaps even you!* Let's see some examples:

Who was the first person Yeshua revealed himself to as the promised MESSIAH? You'd think that would be a wonderfully righteous person, right?

John 4:1-20. The Samaritan woman at the well at noon, on her 6th man (v 17), too ashamed and rejected to go to the well early in the day. Were told Jesus had to go through Samaria. There were other longer routes and options, but I think he wanted to meet and encourage this woman who felt so abandoned, so ashamed. Can you identify with that? I can. **John 4:25-26** Jesus reveals he is the Messiah. Jesus seems to have gone out of his way specifically (v4) to show her kindness and give hope. It's depicted beautifully in the clip in the Chosen.

I have reservations about recommending the show “**the Chosen**” because they take a lot of liberties on dialogue and more. And their long-haired Jesus and most of the disciples will be a turnoff for some of you, but Jonathan Roumie is overall an excellent actor if you get past the long hair. And he's a Catholic. And Mormons help fund and assist the show's costs. I don't watch much of Chosen, but you may **want to watch this 8-minute clip about the episode of the woman at the well**. In spite my reservations, this one was well done.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=el7dzoNV3IY> **Woman at the well**

Those forgiven the most – love the most

But my point is, look how happy she was to have the Messiah reveal himself to HER first, before ANYONE else in all the world. What did she do? *She immediately spread the good news about finding the Messiah and told the whole town.* She kept Jesus and his disciples busy! Remember how she used her joy in forgiveness to spread the word to as many as she could. We'll see that pattern over and over. David – PS 51 – wanted to convert sinners.

Those who know they've been forgiven so much, will also tend to love God and Jesus' more. Here's the story of the woman who poured oil over Jesus' feet and washed her tears away with her hair. Yeshua/Jesus was criticized for allowing such a terrible sinner to touch him. Read the whole story yourself, but here's what he said.

Luke 7:47 New Living Translation

“I tell you, **her sins—and they ARE many**—have been forgiven, so she has **shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love.**”

People have told me that I speak deeply of God's love. If I do, it's because I know I've been forgiven so much. God's grace is greater than any amount of sin (Rom. 5:20-21).

Another example of God's love for the downtrodden: Mary Magdalene – out of whom 7 demons were cast. With all those demons, she could easily have been the town's “crazy and evil woman”.

Luke 8:1-3

“Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, **2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities – Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons**, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.”

Mark 16:9

“Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, **He appeared FIRST to Mary Magdalene**, out of whom He had cast seven demons.”

Mary of Magdala, no doubt a terrible sinner before, with 7 demons egging her on and on, was SO grateful that she remained at the cross, remained at the tomb after others left, and was the FIRST to see the risen Messiah. She appreciated so much what he had done for her and he rewarded her. Those forgiven the most – love the most, remember (Luke 7:47).

Then, after that, after being accepted by God in heaven on wavesheaf day, the first one Jesus appeared to was PETER, as he was so disconsolate for denying Christ 3x, letting him down so much after boasting he was prepared to die for Him (1 Cor. 15:3-5). Obviously God and Christ continued to use Peter in a big way. And Peter was forgiven.

Don't you dare, in the kingdom, ever point someone to "Rahab the harlot". She didn't remain that way! She was selected to be among the ancestors of Jesus Christ.

Some of you are in jail. I believe you're hearing this because God wants YOU to hear it. .. and repent. He will accept you if you do repent and seek Him.

How bad do you think King Ahab, king of the northern 10 tribes of Israel was? He was the most evil, according to scripture (1 Kings 21:25).

1 Kings 16:30 NKJV

"Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him."

1 Kings 16:33

"Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him".

Asherah was shaped as the male organ in the worship of Ishtar. This was called "groves" in the KJV. He killed Naboth, a good man, just because he coveted his vineyard. And 850 false priests of Baal and Asherah were in his service through Jezebel.

You can read God's decree against Ahab in 1 Kings 21. Here's the end of it:

1 Kings 21:23-29 NIV

"And also concerning Jezebel YHVH says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

24 "Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country."

25 (There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife. 26 He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the Lord drove out before Israel.)

27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

28 Then the word of YHVH came to Elijah the Tishbite: 29 "Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son."

Isn't God's mercy amazing, even though Ahab may not have truly repented. Based on the way you think right now, if YOU were God, would you have forgiven Ahab?

KING MANASSEH

The worst king EVER was Manasseh, a king over the House of Judah – 2

Chronicles 33. God heard even HIM. God's mercy is so amazing. I doubt either king totally repented, but they did enough that God heard them both. Could you be any worse than this man? Remember, he was forgiven. So will you be, if you confess, repent, and turn.

2 Chronicles 33:1-20 NIV (I'll post so you can read it all yourself)

***"Manasseh* was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. **2** He did evil in the eyes of YHVH, following the detestable practices of the nations YHVH had driven out before the Israelites. **3** He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshipped them. **4** He built altars in the temple of YHVH, of which YHVH had said, "My Name will remain in Jerusalem forever." **5** In both courts of the temple of YHVH, he built altars to all the starry hosts. **6** **He sacrificed his sons in the fire** in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of YHVH, provoking him to anger.**

7 He took the carved image he had made and put it in God's temple, of which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my Name forever. **8** I will not again make the feet of the Israelites leave the land I assigned to your forefathers, if only they will be careful to do everything I commanded them concerning all the laws, decrees and ordinances given through Moses."

9 But Manasseh led Judah and the people of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations YHVH had destroyed before the Israelites.

10 YHVH spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. **11** So YHVH brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

12 ***In his distress he sought the favor of YHVH his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 13 And when he prayed to him, YHVH was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that YHVH is God.***

14 Afterward he rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, west of the Gihon spring in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate and encircling the hill of Ophel; he also made it much higher. He stationed military commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah.

15 He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. **16** He also repaired the altar of the Lord, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. **17** Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the Lord their God.

If you had been God with the way you are today, would YOU have forgiven Manasseh – the king who sacrificed his own sons in the fire, made Asherah poles, put up idols all over the land, got involved in witchcraft and divination – would you have heard his prayer and forgiven him? I doubt many of us would.

But God noticed, God heard and God reacted to humble prayers even of the most wicked of kings. Even of the most wicked city Nineveh. And God showed honor to the Samaritan woman and Mary Magdalene. This is our model.

Learning from KING David's 2 PRAYERS OF REPENTANCE

King David: we all know how he murdered Uriah after getting Uriah's wife pregnant while Uriah was away. There were terrible consequences, but he was not executed. He will be king in the Millennium over Israel. We still read his Psalms. He was considered a man after God's own heart. He continued working for God and to be used by God. David also knew, and teaches us how to deeply repent.

High lights of Psalm 51 and 2 Samuel 24 – David's prayers of repentance.

Psalms 51 NKJV (MUCH more is said on the audio/video)

Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.

4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight — That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall SING aloud of Your righteousness."

(there are more verses in Psalm 51).

But notice also how David doesn't stay down in the dumps after he repented.

His prayer of deep repentance ends in asking for JOY of salvation being restored. He wants to teach sinners God's way, and sing aloud of God's righteousness in spite of what HE had done. He knew he would be forgiven. This is how to pray for forgiveness.

Yes, he fasted for 7 days hoping God would change His mind about letting their son die, but once the son did die, David got up and ate and got back to the land of the living.

David also numbered Israel, so God killed 70,000 in a plague. But again David's prayer was so humble. "These are just sheep, O Lord. I'M the one who did wrong. Slay ME, but not these innocent sheep, YHVH"

The story is in 1 Chronicles 21, the whole chapter. (More in the video/audio)

The most vital verses are in 14-17.

1 Chronicles 21:14-17

14 So YHVH sent a plague upon Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. 15 And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was destroying, YHVH looked and relented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, "It is enough; now restrain your hand." And the Angel of YHVH stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

16 Then David lifted his eyes and saw the Angel of YHVH standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces.

17 And David said to God, "Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered? I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, O Lord my God, be against me and my father's house, but not against Your people that they should be plagued."

You can read the rest of the story. David had Solomon build the temple of God on that very spot eventually. What started as a terrible place – ended up hosting the glorious holy temple!

When we turn back to God in repentance and change, this is what Jesus feels about you:

Hebrews 2:11 NIV

"Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. **So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.**"

Wow. "Jesus is not ashamed of me". Learn and repeat that.

And so if you know God, you will get back up and back in the fight against sin after you repent. Jesus is not ashamed of me or you. *Neither should any brother or sister in Christ feel ashamed of repentant brethren regardless of their sins.* That's very, very hard for some brethren.

Remember in heaven they're celebrating you as you deeply cry out in deep repentance for your sins (Luke 15:7).

People might say your sins leave you "DISGRACED". But not with God. He's all about his grace – His favor and pardon. Where sin abounds, GOD'S grace shows up in SUPER-abundance. **Romans 5:20-21.** This is something the "good guys" in the church must remember.

It's how we end up that counts. God DOES expect growth, overcoming and change. We are expected to “be converted” – and the Greek there again really means to TURN again, back to God. I believe being converted is one of God's ongoing projects in our lives. AND – staying the course to the very end. We can't keep looking back (**Luke 9:62**).

Paul teaches us to **stop looking back** at what might have been. I'm so bad at that. Stop replaying the sins in your mind. Repent, turn around and move on. Leave sin behind.

Phil 3:12 International Standard Version

“Brothers, I do not consider myself to have embraced it yet. But this one thing I do: ***Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,***”

So important: NONE of us are yet what we want to be. We're not yet what we're going to be. But after repentance, we are no longer what we once were.

What we HOPE for is that whatever evil sins we've committed, *that they will knock out our human confidence in what WE do, and leave us with only one thing left: CONFIDENCE IN Jesus Christ and HIS RESURRECTION* life in us that we ask for and live by going forward.

HE is now our life as Paul said: “I am crucified with Christ. I no longer live except by the life of Jesus, by faith in him (Gal. 2:20). True repentance makes us give up our confidence in anything about ourselves as Philippians 3 is all about.

We have to first SEE ourselves in the flesh – and admit who we are and despise the flesh nature in our lives. Then there's room for the righteousness of GOD HIMSELF to become our own righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. Please listen to “Receiving the righteousness of God” sermons. Understanding that is so vital. And verse 9 below...

Philippians 3:7-14 NIV

“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, *for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

9 and be found in HIM, ***NOT having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.***

10 I want to know Christ **and the power of HIS resurrection** and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: **Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me** heavenward (upward) in Christ Jesus.”

At Christ's Wedding Supper – Revelation 19, which we see happening in heaven, before the final return from heaven to the earth. Some time while up

there, you and I will be given new names, a new start. I see this happening in a grand "awards ceremony" of some type, perhaps on the very Sea of Glass before God's throne. There won't be a dry eye there. People might remember us a certain way, but not God.

Humanity likes to define people by their WORST. Samson and... Delilah. David and Bathsheba and Uriah. Rahab the harlot. Peter and his denials 3 times. Doubting Thomas. Martha, Martha...

GOD is not like that. He sees us how we are if we have faith in his grace and the work of Jesus Christ in our lives. He sees his perfect son as our covering, as our life.

There's nothing bad recorded about the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11, the Faith Chapter. NOTHING. There's no mention of Abraham giving up his wife twice to the harems of pagan kings. Nothing about Samson. No mention of Delilah. No mention of Uriah or Bathsheba. No mention of Jacob's trickery. Nothing... just their faith!

Our job going forward? **Focus on Jesus Christ – as if in a mirror. HE'S our mirror we look at.** We don't focus on past sins, or how others see us, but just Jesus and Father. My "Constant contact" program is part of this. **As we talk to him throughout the day, and focus on him, we'll grow more and more in his image, watch.**

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 NKJV

"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
18 But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."**

We don't grow in character of Jesus Christ by just trying to copy him so hard. *We copy as well, sure.* But the main thing is focusing on him, his righteousness, his faith in God, by faith. "The Lord is the Spirit." **As we focus on Him in faith, we're being transformed.** The same is true about sin. If we intensely focus on sinful acts via movies we let ourselves watch, those same sins get ingrained in our minds and hearts. That's why it's so important to monitor what you let yourself see.

And please my brothers and sisters, when we know or see a brother/sister in a terrible sin, and we know they repented later, let them see God's grace and love in your face as you inspire them to continue in the love of God. And don't be ashamed of them. Jesus isn't.

Jude 24-25

**"Now to Him *who is able to keep you from stumbling,*
And to present you FAULTLESS
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding JOY,
25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen."**

Closing prayer.