

The Doctrine of Repentance

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- I. A Preliminary Discourse
 - A. Paul speaks of his pre-conversion life to King Agrippa.
 1. He speaks of the manner of his life before his conversion:
 - a. *[Acts 26.5]- Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.*
 - b. *[Acts 26.10]- Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.*
 2. He speaks of the manner of his conversion:
 - a. *[Acts 26.13]- At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.*
 - b. *[Acts 26.14-15]- And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.*
 3. He speaks of the manner of his life after his conversion.
 - a. *[Acts 26.16]- But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;*
 - b. *[Acts 26.20]- But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.*
 - B. Faith and Repentance
 1. *[Habakkuk 2.4]- Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*
 - C. Repentance the great duty of Christians.
 1. *[Matthew 3.2]- And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*
 2. *[Acts 3.19]- Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*
 3. *[Acts 8.22]- Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*
 4. *[Hebrews 6.1]- Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,*
 - D. Repentance a grace required under the Gospel
 1. *[Matthew 4.17]- From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*
 2. *[Luke 24.47]- And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*
 3. *[Mark 6.12]- And they went out, and preached that men should repent.*
 - E. The manner in which repentance.
 1. Partly by the Word.
 - a. *[Acts 2.37]- Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*
 - b. *[Jeremiah 23.29]- Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*

2. By the Spirit.
 - a. *[Acts 10.44]- While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*
 - b. *[Zechariah 12.10]- And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*
 - c. *[1 John 2.20]- But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.*
 - d. *[Acts 8.29]- Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.*

II. Counterfeit Repentance

A. The first deceit of repentance is legal terror

1. *"If pain and trouble were sufficient to repentance, then the damned in hell should be most penitent, for they are most in anguish."*

B. Another deceit about repentance is resolution against sin

1. *[Jeremiah 2.20]- For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot.*
2. From present extremity
 - a. Not because sin is sinful, but because it is painful. This resolution will vanish.
3. From fear of future evil, an apprehension of death and hell.
 - a. *[Revelation 6.8]-And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

C. The third deceit about repentance is leaving many sinful ways alone.

1. *[Micah 6.7]- Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*
2. A man may part with some sins and keep others, as Herod reformed many things that were amiss but could not leave his incest.
 - a. *[Matthew 14.3]- For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.*
3. An old sin may be left in order to entertain a new, as you put off an old servant to take another. This is to exchange a sin. Sin may be exchanged and the heart remained unchanged. He who was a prodigal in his youth turns usurer in his old age. A slave is sold to a Jew; the Jew sells him to a Turk. Here the master is changed, but he is a slave still. So a man moves from one vice to another but remains a sinner still.
4. A sin may be left not so much from strength of grace as from reasons of prudence. A man sees that though such a sin be for his pleasure, yet it is not for his interest. It will eclipse his credit, prejudice his health, impair his estate. Therefore, for prudential reasons, he dismisses it.
5. True leaving of sin is when the acts of sin cease from the infusion of a principle of grace, as the air ceases be dark from the infusion of light.

III. The Nature of True Repentance Part 1.

A. Ingredient 1: Sight of Sin.

1. *[Acts 26.18]- To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

2. *[Luke 15.17]- And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!*
3. *[1 Kings 8.47]- Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;*
4. *[Ephesians 5.8]- For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*
5. *[Zechariah 11.17]- Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.*

B. Ingredient 2: Sorrow for Sin

1. Sorrow for sin is as if the soul crucified.
2. Outward signs of inward sorrow.
 - a. *[Psalm 38.18]- For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.*
 - b. *[Zechariah 12.10]- And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*
 - c. *[Luke 7.38]- And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*
 - d. *[Psalm 51.17]- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*
 - e. *[Joel 2.13]- And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*
 - f. *[Jeremiah 31.19]- Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.*
 - g. *[Luke 18.13]- And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*
 - h. *[Isaiah 22.12]- And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:*
 - i. *[Ezra 9.3]- And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.*
3. Fruit of sorrow.
 - a. To make Christ precious. O how desirable is a Saviour to a troubled soul!
 - b. To drive out sin. Sin breeds sorrow, and sorrow kills sin.
 - c. To make way for solid comfort:
 - 1.) *[Psalm 126.5]- They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*
 - 2.) *[1 Samuel 1.18]- And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.*
 - 3.) *[John 5.8]- Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*
 - d. *[2 Corinthians 7.9]- Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.*
4. True godly sorrow:
 - a. Inward.
 - 1.) It is a sorrow of the heart.

- a.) *[Matthew 6.16]- Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.*
 - b.) *[1 Kings 21.27]- And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.*
 - c.) *[Acts 2.37]- Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*
- 2.) It is a sorrow for heart-sins, the first outbreaks and risings of sin.
- a.) *[Romans 7.23]- But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*
- b. Ingenuous or sincere.
- 1.) *[Psalm 51.3]- For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.*
- c. Fiducial or faithful.
- 1.) *[Mark 9.24]- And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*
 - 2.) *[Numbers 21.8-9]- And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.*
- d. A great sorrow.
- 1.) *[Zechariah 12.11]- In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.*
 - 2.) Question 1: Do all have the same degree of sorrow?
 - a.) No, sorrow does *recipere magis & minus* - produce greater or lesser sorrows. In the new birth all have pangs, but some have sharper pangs than others.
 - b.) Some are naturally of a more rugged disposition, of higher spirits, and are not easily brought to stoop. These must have greater humiliation, as a knotty piece of timber must have greater wedges driven into it.
 - c.) Some have been more heinous offenders, and their sorrow must be suitable to their sin. Some patients have their sores let out with a needle, others with a lance. Flagitious sinners must be more bruised with the hammer of the Law.
 - d.) Some are designed and cut out for higher service, to be eminently instrumental for God, and these must have a mightier work of humiliation pass upon them. Those whom God intends to be pillars in His church must be more hewn. Paul, the prince of the apostles, who was to be God's ensign-bearer to carry His name before the Gentiles and kings, was to have his heart more deeply lanced by repentance.
 - 3.) Question 2: But how great must sorrow for sin be in all?
 - a.) It must be as great as for any worldly loss. *Turgescunt lumina fletu.*
 - b.) *[Zechariah 12.10]- And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*
 - c.) *[Isaiah 22.12]- And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:*

- d.) *[Jeremiah 22.10]- Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.*
- e.) *[Jeremiah 16.6]- Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them:*
- e. In some cases, joined with restitution.
- 1.) *[Numbers 5.7]- Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.*
 - 2.) *[Luke 19.8]- And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.*
 - 3.) "Without restitution, no remission." – Augustine
 - 4.) "If ye restore not goods unjustly gotten, ye shall cough in hell." - Latimer
 - 5.) Question 1: Suppose a person has wronged another in his estate and the wronged man is dead, what should he do?
 - a.) Let him restore his ill-gotten goods to that man's heirs and successors. If none of them be living, let him restore to God, that is, let him put his unjust gain into God's treasury by relieving the poor.
 - 6.) Question 2: What if the party who did the wrong is dead?
 - a.) Then they who are his heirs ought to make restitution. Mark what I say: if there be any who have estates left them, and they know that the parties who left their estates had defrauded others and died with that guilt upon them, then the heirs or executors who possess those estates are bound in conscience to make restitution, otherwise they entail the curse of God upon their family.
 - 7.) Question 3: If a man has wronged another and is not able to restore, what should he do?
 - a.) Let him deeply humble himself before God, promising to the wronged party full satisfaction if the Lord make him able, and God will accept the will for the deed.
- f. Abiding.
- 1.) *Use:* How far are they from repentance who never had any of this godly sorrow! Such are:
 - a.) The Papists; who leave out the very soul of repentance, making all penitential work consist in fasting, penance, pilgrimages, in which there is nothing of spiritual sorrow.
 - b.) Carnal Protestants, who are strangers to godly sorrow.
 - 2.) There is a two-fold sorrow:
 - a.) A rational sorrow, which is an act of the soul whereby it has a displacency against sin and chooses any torture rather than to admit sin. All Christians have this sorrow.
 - b.) A sensitive sorrow, which is expressed by many tears. Only some Christians have.
 - 1.) *[Judges 18.24]- And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?*
 - 3.) Two special times when we must renew our repentance in an extraordinary manner:
 - a.) Before the receiving of the Lord's Supper.
 - 1.) *[Genesis 32.30]- And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*

2.) *[John 20.27]- Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

b.) At the hour of death.

1.) *[Job 14.17]- My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.*

C. Ingredient 3: Confession of Sin.

1. Vented with passion.

a. *[Nehemiah 9.2]- And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.*

b. *[Hosea 5.15]- I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.*

2. Confession is self-accusing:

a. *[2 Samuel 24.17]- And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.*

b. *[Revelation 12.10]- And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

c. *[1 Corinthians 11.31]- For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

3. Confession must be voluntary.

a. *[Numbers 22.34]- And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.*

b. *[Luke 15.18]- I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,*

4. Confession must be with compunction.

a. *[Psalm 38.4]- For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*

5. Confession must be sincere.

a. *Augustine said that before his conversion he confessed sin and begged power against it, but his heart whispered within him, "not yet, Lord."*

6. In true confession a man particularizes sin.

a. A wicked man acknowledges he is a sinner in general.

1.) *[Daniel 2.3-5]- And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.*

b. By a diligent inspection into our hearts we may find some particular sin indulged; point to that sin with a tear.

1.) *[Judges 10.10]- And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.*

- 2.) *[Daniel 9.6]- Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.*
7. A true penitent confesses sin in the fountain.
- a. He acknowledges the pollution of his nature.
 - 1.) *[Psalm 51.5]- Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
 - 2.) *[Deuteronomy 29.18]- Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;*
8. Sin is to be confessed with all its circumstances and aggravations.
- a. *[Psalm 78.31-32]- The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel. For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.*
9. In confession we must so charge ourselves as to clear God.
- a. *[Nehemiah 9.33]- Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly:*
 - b. Mauritianus, the emperor, when he saw his wife slain before his eyes by Phocas, cried out, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy ways."
10. We must confess our sins with a resolve not to repeat them.
- a. *[Isaiah 1.16]- Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;*
 - b. *[Exodus 9.27,34]- And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.*
 - c. *[2 Peter 2.22]-But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*
11. Use 1: Is confession a necessary ingredient in repentance? Here is a bill of indictment against four sorts of persons:
- a. It reproves those that hide their sins.
 - 1.) *[Genesis 31.34]- Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 50.21]- These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*
 - 3.) *[Proverbs 28.13]- He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*
 - b. It reproves those who do indeed confess sin but only by halves.
 - c. It reproves those who in their confessions mince and extenuate their sins.
 - 1.) *[1 Samuel 15.24]- And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*
 - 2.) *[Genesis 3.12]- And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

- 3.) *[1 Kings 18.44]- And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down that the rain stop thee not.*
- d. It reproves those who are so far from confessing sin that they boldly plead for it.
- 1.) *[Jonah 4.9]- And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.*
12. Use 2: Let us show ourselves penitents by sincere confession of sin.
- a. *[Luke 23.41-43]- And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.*
- b. *"That confession of sin shuts the mouth of hell and opens the gate of paradise."* – Augustine
13. That we may make a free and ingenuous confession of sin, let us consider:
- a. Holy confession gives glory to God:
- 1.) *[Joshua 7.19]- And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.*
- b. Confession is a means to humble the soul.
- 1.) *[2 Chronicles 26.19]- Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.*
- c. Confession gives vent to a troubled heart.
- d. Confession purges out sin.
- 1.) *[Nehemiah 3.13]- The valley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate.*
- e. Confession of sin endears Christ to the soul.
- 1.) *[Romans 7.25]- I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*
- f. Confession of sin makes way for pardon.
- 1.) *[Luke 15.20]- And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.*
- 2.) *[2 Samuel 12.13]- And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.*
- 3.) *[1 John 1.9]- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- g. How reasonable and easy is this command that we should confess sin!
- 1.) It is a *reasonable* command, for if one has wronged another, what is more rational than to confess he has wronged him?
- 2.) It is an *easy* command. What a vast difference is there between the first covenant and the second!

a.) *[Jeremiah 3.13]- Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.*

14. Three cases there ought to be confession of men:

a. Where a person has fallen into scandalous sin and by it has been an occasion of offence to some and of falling to others, he ought to make a solemn and open acknowledgement of his sin, that his repentance may be as visible as his scandal.

1.) *[2 Corinthians 2.6-7]- Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.*

b. Where a man has confessed his sin to God, yet still his conscience is burdened, and he can have no ease in his mind, it is very requisite that he should confess his sins to some prudent, pious friend, who may advise him and speak a word in due season.

1.) *[James 5.16]- Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

c. Where any man has slandered another and by clipping his good name has made it weigh lighter, he is bound to make confession.

1.) *[Matthew 5.23-24]- Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

IV. The Nature of True Repentance Part 2

A. Ingredient 4: Shame for Sin

1. *[Ezekiel 43.10]- Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern.*

2. *[Ezra 9.6]- And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.*

3. *[Luke 15.21]- And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.*

4. Considerations

a. Every sin makes us guilty, and guilt usually breeds shame.

b. In every sin there is much unthankfulness, and that is a matter of shame.

1.) *[Jeremiah 2.5]- Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?*

2.) *[Deuteronomy 32.15]- But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.*

3.) *[Isaiah 1.2]- Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.*

c. Sin has made us naked, and that may breed shame.

1.) *[2 Samuel 10.5]- When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.*

d. Our sins have put Christ to shame, and should not we be ashamed?

1.) *[Hebrews 12.2]- Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- e. Many sins, which we commit, are by the special instigation of the devil, and should not this cause shame?
- 1.) *[John 13.2]- And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;*
 - 2.) *[Acts 5.3]- But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*
 - 3.) *[James 3.6]- And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*
 - 4.) *[Luke 1.35]- And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*
- f. Sin, like Circe's enchanting cup, turns men into beasts.
- 1.) *[Psalm 49.12]- Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.*
 - 2.) *[Luke 13.32]- And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.*
 - 3.) *[Matthew 7.15]- Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*
 - 4.) *[Job 11.12]- For vain men would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.*
 - 5.) *[2 Peter 2.22]- But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*
 - 6.) *[Proverbs 30.2]- Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.*
- g. In every sin there is folly.
- 1.) *[Jeremiah 4.22]- For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*
 - 2.) *[Proverbs 14.18]- The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*
- h. That which may make us blush is that the sins we commit are far worse than the sins of the heathen.
- i. Our sins are worse than the sins of the devils:
- 1.) The lapsed angels never sinned against Christ's blood.
 - 2.) The devils never sinned against God's patience.
 - a.) *[Jeremiah 15.6]- Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.*
 - 3.) The devils never sinned against example. They were the first that sinned and were made the first example.
5. Use 1: Is shame an ingredient of repentance? If so, how far are they from being penitents who have no shame?
- a. Many have sinned away shame:
 - 1.) *[Zephaniah 3.5]- Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.*

- 2.) ***[Jeremiah 6:15]- Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.***
- b. There are some so far from this holy blushing that they are proud of their sins.
- 1.) ***[1 Corinthians 11:14]- Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?***
- c. Others are so far from being ashamed of sin that they glory in their sins:
- 1.) ***[Philippians 3.19]- Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)***
- 2.) ***[Isaiah 5.22]- Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:***
6. Use 2: Let us show our penitence by a modest blushing:
- a. ***[Ezra 9:6]- And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.***
- b. ***[Ephesians 5:27]- That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.***
- c. ***[Luke 21.28]- And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.***
- B. Ingredient 5: Hatred of Sin
1. A two-fold hatred.
- a. A hatred or loathing of abominations:
- 1.) ***[Ezekiel 36.31]- Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.***
- 2.) ***[Zechariah 3.4-5]- And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.***
- b. A hatred of enmity.
- 1.) ***"Hatred, is anger boiled up to an inveteracy {tenacity}."- Cicero***
- 2.) ***"Sound repentance begins in the love of God and ends in the hatred of sin."***
2. How may true hatred of sin be known?
- a. When a man's spirit is set against sin.
- 1.) ***"The tongue does not only inveigh against sin, but the heart abhors it, so that however curiously painted sin appears, we find it odious,"***
- 2.) ***"As we abhor the picture of one whom we mortally hate, even though it may be well drawn."***
- b. True hatred of sin is universal.
- 1.) Hatred is universal in respect of the faculties,
- a.) A dislike of sin not only in the judgment, but in the will and affections.
- b.) ***[Romans 7.15]- For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.***
- 2.) Hatred is universal in respect of the object.

- a.) *[Psalm 119.104]- Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*
- b.) *[Romans 7.23]- But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*
- c. True hatred against sin is against sin in all forms.
- 1.) He hates this serpent not only for its sting but for its poison.
 - 2.) He hates sin not only for hell, but as hell.
- d. True hatred is implacable.
- 1.) Sin is that Amalek which is never to be taken into favour again.
 - 2.) *[1 Kings 14.30]- And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.*
- e. Where there is a real hatred, we not only oppose sin in ourselves but in others too.
- 1.) *[Revelation 2.2]- I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*
 - 2.) *[Galatians 2.14]- But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?*
 - 3.) *[John 2.15]- And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;*
 - 4.) *[Nehemiah 5.7]- Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.*
 - 5.) *[Nehemiah 13.17]- Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?*
 - 6.) *[Psalm 101.7]- He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.*
 - 7.) *[Jeremiah 11.15]- What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.*
 - 8.) *[Hebrews 10.26]- For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*
 - 9.) *[Ecclesiastes 9.3]- This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.*
3. Question: What is there in sin that may make a penitent hate it?
- a. Answer: Sin is the cursed thing, the most misshapen monster.
 - b. *[Romans 7.13]- Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*
 - c. Look upon the *origin of sin*—from whence it comes.
 - 1.) *[1 John 3.8]- He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*
 - d. Look upon sin in its *nature*, and it will appear very hateful.
 - 1.) *[Romans 2.23]- Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?*

- 2.) *[Ezekiel 16.43]- Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these things; behold, therefore I also will recompense thy way upon thine head, saith the Lord GOD: and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.*
 - 3.) *[Ezra 6.9]- And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:*
 - 4.) *[Hebrews 6.6]- If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*
- e. Look upon sin in its *comparison*, and it appears ghastly.
- 1.) *[Psalm 119.71]- It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*
 - 2.) *[2 Chronicles 33.12]- And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,*
 - 3.) *[1 Corinthians 11.32]- But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*
 - 4.) *[Luke 12.20]- But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*
 - 5.) *[Ephesians 5.19]- Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
 - 6.) *[Revelation 3.19]- As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*
 - 7.) *[Psalm 97.2]- Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*
 - 8.) *[Psalm 81.12]- So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.*
 - 9.) *[Amos 2.13]- Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.*
- f. Look upon sin in the *issue and consequence*, and it will appear hateful.
- 1.) Sin is the Trojan horse out of which comes a whole army of troubles.
 - 2.) *[2 Samuel 13.15]- Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.*
- C. Ingredient 6: Turning from Sin
1. A reformation of the heart.
 - a. *[Joel 2.12]- Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:*
 - b. *[Ezekiel 14.6]- Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.*
 - c. *[Isaiah 55.7]- Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*
 - d. *[Job 11.14]- If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.*
 - e. *[Acts 28.5]- And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.*
 2. A reformation of the life.
 - a. *[Ephesians 5.8]- For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

- b. *[Acts 9.21]- But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?*
 - c. *[Acts 16.33]- And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*
3. Turning from sin be rightly qualified, these few things are requisite:
- a. It must be a turning from sin with the heart.
 - 1.) The heart is the *primum vivens*, the first thing that lives, and it must be the *primum vertens*, the first thing that turns.
 - 2.) *[Jeremiah 3.10]- And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.*
 - b. It must be a turning from all sin.
 - 1.) *[Isaiah 55.7).]- Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*
 - 2.) *[2 Kings 10.24]- And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him.*
 - c. It must be a turning from sin upon a spiritual ground.
 - 1.) *Three men [were] asking one another what made them leave sin: one says, "I think of the joys of heaven"; another, "I think of the torments of hell"; but the third, "I think of the love of God, and that makes me forsake it."*
 - d. It must be such a turning from sin as turns to God.
 - 1.) *[Act 26.20]- But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.*
 - 2.) *[Hebrews 6.1]- Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,*
 - 3.) *[Acts 20.21]- Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - 4.) *[Hosea 7.16]- They return, but not to the most High: they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt.*
 - e. True turning from sin is such a turn, as has no return.
 - 1.) *[Hosea 14.8]- Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 85.8]- I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.*
 - 3.) *[Jeremiah 2.5]- Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?*
 - 4.) *[Malachi 2.16]- For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.*
 - 5.) *[Matthew 12.45]- Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.*
 - 6.) *[Acts 3.26]- Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*

4. Use 1: Is turning from sin a necessary ingredient in repentance? If so, then there is little repentance to be found.
 - a. *[Isaiah 9.13]- For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.*
 - b. *[Hosea 4.17]- Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.*
5. Use 2: It reproves those who are but half-turned.
 - a. Such as turn in their judgment but not in their practice.
 - 1.) *[Acts 26.28]- Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*
 - 2.) *[Hosea 7.8]- Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned.*
 - b. They are but half-turned who turn only from gross sin but have no intrinsic work of grace.
 - c. They are but half-turned who turn from many sins but are unturned from some special sin.
6. Use 3: Let us show ourselves penitents in turning from sin to God.
 - a. *[Jeremiah 8.5]- Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.*
 - b. *[Ezekiel 33.11]- 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?*
 - c. *[Proverbs 9.12]- If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.*
 - d. *[Psalm 86.16]- O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.*
 - e. *[Zechariah 1.3]- Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.*
 - f. *[Psalm 91.11]- For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

V. The Reasons Enforcing Repentance, with a Warning to the Impenitent.

A. Repentance is God's sovereign command.

1. *[Acts 17.30]- And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*
2. *[Exodus 34.6-7]- And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.*

B. The pure nature of God denies communion with an impenitent creature.

1. *[Isaiah 1.16]- Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;*
2. *[Isaiah 1.18]- Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*
3. *[2 Corinthians 6.14]- Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*
4. *[Exodus 23.7]- Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.*

C. Sinners continuing in impenitence are out of Christ's commission.

1. *[Isaiah 61.1]- The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;*
2. *[Acts 5.31]- Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

D. We have wronged God by sin.

E. If God should save men without repentance, making no discrimination, then by this rule He must save all.

1. Two sorts of persons who will find it harder to repent than others:
 - a. Those who have sat a great while under the ministry of God's ordinances but grow no better.
 - 1.) *[Hebrews 6.8]- But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.*
 - 2.) *[Matthew 21.19]- And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.*
 - b. Those who have sinned frequently against the convictions of the Word, the checks of conscience, and the motions of the Spirit.
 - 1.) *[Job 24.13]- They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.*
2. A Reprehension to the Impenitent.
 - a. It serves sharply to reprove all unrepentant sinners whose hearts seem to be hewn out of a rock and are like the stony ground that lacked moisture in the parable.
 - 1.) *[Jeremiah 8.6]- I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.*
 - 2.) *[Zechariah 7.12]- Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.*
 - 3.) *[Matthew 11.20]- Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:*
 - 4.) *[Jeremiah 2.25]- Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.*
 - b. The justice of God, like the angel, stands with a drawn sword in its hand, ready to strike, but sinners have not eyes as good as those of Balaam's ass to see the sword.
 - 1.) *[Jeremiah 31.19]- Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.*
 - 2.) *[Jeremiah 5.3]- O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.*
 - 3.) *[2 Chronicles 28.22]- And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz.*
 - c. It is not falling into water that drowns, but lying in it. It is not falling into sin that damns, but lying in it without repentance:
 - 1.) *[1 Timothy 4.2]- Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

2.) *[Isaiah 1.5]- Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*

VI. A Serious Exhortation to Repentance.

A. Repentance is necessary

B. Repentance is necessary for all persons.

1. *[Acts 17.30]- And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*
 2. It is necessary for great ones.
 - a. *[Jeremiah 13.18]- Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory.*
 - b. *[Jonah 3.6]- For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.*
 - c. *[Isaiah 30.33]- For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.*
 3. Repentance is necessary for the flagitious sinners in the nation.
 - a. *[Ezekiel 24.13]- In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.*
 - b. *[Isaiah 3.9]- The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.*
 - c. *[Job 15.25-26]- For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:*
 - d. *[Zephaniah 1.12]- And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.*
 - e. *[Zechariah 5.2]- And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.*
 - f. *[1 Samuel 2.25]- If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.*
 4. Repentance is necessary for the cheating crew.
 - a. *[Psalm 119.118]- Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.*
 - b. *[Jeremiah 4.22]- For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*
 - c. *[Proverbs 20.17]- Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.*
 5. Repentance is necessary for civil persons.
 - a. *[Luke 15.7]- I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.*
 - b. *[Luke 11.26]- Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.*
 6. Repentance is needful for hypocrites.

- a. *[2 Timothy 3.5]- Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*
 - b. *[Hosea 11.12]- Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.*
 - c. *[Act 8.23]- For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*
 - d. Their condition is sinful and sad.
 - 1.) This art of deceit cannot hold long;
 - 2.) God's anger will fall heavier upon hypocrites.
 - a.) *[Matthew 24.51]- And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*
7. Repentance is necessary for God's own people.
- a. *[Galatians 5.24]- And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*
 - b. *[2 Chronicles 28.10]- And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you: but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the LORD your God?*
 - c. *[Deuteronomy 32.5]- They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.*
 - d. Areas in need of repentance.
 - 1.) Repent of your rash censuring.
 - a.) *[1 Corinthians 6.2]- Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?*
 - b.) *[1 Corinthians 4:5]- Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*
 - 2.) Repent of your vain thoughts.
 - a.) *[Exodus 8.24]- And the LORD did so; and there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies.*
 - b.) *[Jeremiah 4.14]- O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*
 - 3.) Repent of your vain fashions.
 - a.) *[Romans 12.2]- And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
 - b.) *[Hosea 4.15]- Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven, nor swear, The LORD liveth.*
 - c.) *[1 Timothy 2.9]- In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*
 - 4.) Repent of your decays in grace:
 - a.) *[Revelation 2.4]- Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*
 - 5.) Repent of your non-improvement of talents.
 - a.) *[Luke 19.18]- And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.*

- 6.) Repent of your forgetfulness of sacred vows.
 - a.) *[Numbers 30.2]- If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.*
- 7.) Repent of your unanswerableness to blessings received.
 - a.) *[Hosea 2.9]- Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness.*
- 8.) Repent of your worldliness.
 - a.) *[Jeremiah 45.5]- And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.*
- 9.) Repent of your divisions.
 - a.) *[Hebrews 7.26]- For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;*
 - b.) *[Act 2.3]- And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*
- 10.) Repent for the iniquity of your holy things.
 - a.) *[Deuteronomy 32:19]- And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.*
 - b.) *[Mark 14.72]- And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.*

C. Repentance is necessary for all sins.

1. Let us be deeply humbled and mourn before the Lord for original sin.
 - a. *[Acts 10.12]- Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.*
 - b. *[Romans 7.19]- For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*
 - c. *[Act 28.5]- And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.*
 - d. *[Romans 7.17]- Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*
 - e. *[I Kings 17.16]- And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.*
2. We see what in original sin may draw forth our tears.
 - a. Let us lament the corruption of our will and our affections.
 - 1.) *[Jeremiah 44.17]- But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.*
 - b. Let us grieve for the diversion of our affections.
 - c. Let us grieve for the inclination of our affections.
 - d. Let us lay to heart actual sins.
 - 1.) *[Psalm 19.12]- Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

VII. Powerful Motives to Repentance.

- A. Sorrow and a melting heart will fit us for every holy duty.
1. *[Acts 9.11]- And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,*
 2. *[2 Chronicles 34.19]- And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.*
 3. *[Act 9.6]- And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*
- B. Repentance is highly acceptable.
1. *[Psalm 51.17]- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*
 2. *[Luke 7.38]- And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*
 3. *[Psalm 6.8]- Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.*
- C. Repentance commends all our services to God.
1. *[Acts 2.37]- Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*
 2. *[Luke 18.14]- I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*
- D. Without repentance nothing will avail us.
- E. Repenting tears are delicious.
1. *[Job 41.22]-In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.*
 2. *[John 16.21]- A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.*
- F. Great sins repented of shall find mercy.
1. *[Luke 7.44]- And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.*
 2. *[Isaiah 1.18]- Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*
 3. *[Genesis 19.36]- Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.*
 4. *[Matthew 26.70]- But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.*
 5. *[Galatians 2.12]- For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.*
 6. *[Matthew 18.22]- Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.*
- G. Repentance is the inlet to spiritual blessings.
1. *[2 Corinthians 3.16]- Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.*
 2. *[Luke 7.47]- Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*

3. *[Galatians 5.22]- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
- H. Repentance ushers in temporal blessings.
1. *[Joel 2.13, 19]- And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen:*
 2. *[Haggai 1.6]- Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*
 3. *[Job 22.23-24]- If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.*
- I. Repentance staves off judgments from a land.
1. *[Genesis 22.12]- And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*
 2. *[Jonah 3.10]- And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.*
 3. *[1 Kings 21.29]- Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.*
- J. Repentance makes joy in heaven.
1. *[Luke 15.10]- Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.*
- K. Consider how dear our sins cost Christ.
1. *[1 Corinthians 10.4]- And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*
 2. *[Daniel 9.26]- And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*
 3. *"We sinned in every faculty, and He bled in every vein: Cernis ut in toto corpore sculptus amor."*
 4. *[John 19:12]- And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.*
- L. This is the purpose of all afflictions, which God sends.
1. *[Deuteronomy 8.2]- And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*
 2. *[2 Chronicles 33.12-13]- And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.*
- M. The days of our mourning will soon be ended.

1. *[Revelation 7.17]- For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

N. The happy and glorious reward that follows upon repentance.

1. *[Romans 6.22]- But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*
2. *[1 Corinthians 2.9]- But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*
3. *[Matthew 17.2]- And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

O. The next motive to repentance is to consider the evil of impenitence.

1. *[Ezekiel 36.26]- A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*
2. *[Mark 3.5]- And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.*
3. *[Revelation 2.21]- And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.*

P. The last motive to repentance is that the Day of Judgment is coming.

1. *[Acts 17.30-31]- And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

VIII. Exhortations to Speedy Repentance.

A. Need for haste.

1. *[Acts 17.30]- And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*
2. *[1 Samuel 21.8]- And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.*

B. Tendency to procrastinate.

1. *[Haggai 1.2]- Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built.*

C. Now is the season of repentance, and everything is best done in its season.

1. *[2 Corinthians 6.2]- (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

D. The sooner you repent the fewer sins you will have to answer for.

1. *[1 John 2.1]- My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:*

E. The sooner we repent, the more glory we may bring to God.

1. *[Luke 19.17]- And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*

F. It is of dangerous consequence to put off repentance longer.

1. *[Acts 26.18]- To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*
2. *[Luke 15.29]- And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:*
3. *[Jeremiah 13:23]- Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*
4. It is dangerous to prorogue and delay repentance because there are three days that may soon expire:
 - a. The day of the Gospel may expire.
 - 1.) *[Luke 19.42]- Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.*
 - 2.) *[Hosea 7.9]- Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.*
 - 3.) *[Matthew 21.43]- Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*
 - b. A man's personal day of grace may expire.
 - 1.) *[Hosea 9.4]- They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.*
 - 2.) When conscience has done preaching.
 - a.) *[2 Samuel 12.7]- And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;*
 - b.) *[Revelation 22.11]- He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*
 - 3.) When a person is in such a spiritual lethargy that nothing will work upon him or make him sensible.
 - a.) *[Isaiah 29.10]- For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.*
 - c. The day of life may expire.
 - 1.) *[Psalm 103.15]- As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.*
 - 2.) You who put off repentance till sickness, answer me these four queries:
 - a.) How do you know that you shall have a time of sickness?
 - b.) Suppose you should have a time of sickness: how do you know that you shall have the use of your senses?
 - c.) Suppose you should have your senses, yet how do you know your mind will be in a frame for such a work as repentance?
 - 1.) *[James 5.14]- Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*
 - d.) How do you who put off all to a sickbed know that God will give you in that very juncture of time grace to repent?
 - 1.) *[2 Timothy 4.21]- Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.*

2.) *[Hebrews 3.7]- Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,*

IX. The Trial of Our Repentance, and Comfort for the Penitent.

A. Proof text

1. *[2 Corinthians 7:11]- For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

B. Several adjuncts, or effects of repentance.

1. Carefulness.

- a. The Greek word signifies a solicitous diligence or careful shunning of all temptations to sin.
- b. *[Job 1.1]- There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

2. Clearing ourselves.

- a. The Greek word is “apology.”
- b. He pours out tears before the Lord. He begs mercy in the name of Christ and never leaves till he has gotten His pardon.
- c. Here he is cleared of guilt in his conscience and is able to make an apology for himself against Satan.
- d. *[Acts 23.1]-And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.*
- e. *[Acts 24.16]- And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void to offence toward God, and toward men.*
- f. *[1 Timothy 1.5]- Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:*
- g. *[1 Timothy 1.19]- Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*

3. Indignation.

- a. *[Psalm 73.22]- So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.*

4. Fear.

- a. *[Proverbs 28.14]- Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.*
- b. *[Job 41:33]- Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.*

5. Vehement desire.

- a. *[Romans 7.24]- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

6. Zeal.

- a. *[Matthew 11.12]- And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*
- b. *[Acts 26.11] And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.*
- c. *[Acts 26.24]- And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.*
- d. *[Romans 12.11]- Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*

7. Revenge.
 - a. A true penitent pursues his sins with a holy malice.
 - b. He seeks the death of his sins as Samson was avenged on the Philistines for his two eyes.
 - c. *[Galatians 5.24]- And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*
 - d. *[Isaiah 30.22]- Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.*
 - e. *[Exodus 38.8]- And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*
 - f. *[Acts 19.19]- Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.*

8. Sorrow
 - a. *[2 Corinthians 7.10]- For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*
 - b. Necessary Caution
 - 1.) The papists make repentance a sacrament
 - a.) Repentance can be no sacrament because it lacks an outward sign. A sacrament cannot properly be without a sign
 - 2.) The papists make repentance meritorious
 - a.) They say it does ex congruo (altogether fittingly) merit pardon
 - b.) As the ground broken up by the plough is fitted for the seed, so the heart broken up by repentance is fitted for remission—but it does not merit it.

9. Comfort for the Repenting Sinner
 - a. Your sins are pardoned.
 - 1.) *[Psalm 32.1]- Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*
 - 2.) *[Psalm 103.3-4]- Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;*
 - 3.) *[Luke 7.48]- And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.*
 - 4.) *[Zechariah 13.1]- In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*
 - 5.) *[Isaiah 44.22]- I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.*
 - b. God will pass an act of oblivion.
 - 1.) *[Jeremiah 31.34]- And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*
 - 2.) *[Micah 7.19]- He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*
 - 3.) *[Isaiah 43.25]- I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*
 - c. Conscience will now speak peace.
 - 1.) *[2 Corinthians 1.12]- For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.*

2.) *[Luke 6.20]- And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.*

X. Removing the Impediments to Repentance.

A. Men do not apprehend that they need repentance.

1. *[Revelation 3.17]- Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*
2. *[Malachi 3.7]- Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?*

B. People conceive it an easy thing to repent.

1. A wicked man has a mountain of guilt upon him, and is it easy to rise up under such a weight?
 - a. *[Luke 16.26]- And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.*
2. If all the power in a sinner be employed against repentance, then repentance is not easy.
 - a. *[Jeremiah 2.25]- Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.*

C. Presumptuous thoughts of God's mercy.

1. *[1 Timothy 1.15]- This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
2. *[1 Peter 2.8]-And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*
3. *[Malachi 4.2]- But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*
4. *[Psalm 130.4]- But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.*

D. A supine sluggish attitude.

1. *[Proverbs 19.24]- A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.*
2. *[Proverbs 19.15]- Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

E. The tickling pleasure of sin.

1. *[2 Thessalonians 2.12]- That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*
2. *[2 Samuel 2.26]- Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?*

F. An opinion that repentance will take away our joy.

1. *"It does not crucify but clarify our joy, and takes it off from the fulsome lees of sin."*
2. *[Romans 14.17]- For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
3. *[Isaiah 61.3]- To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*
4. *[Isaiah 57.15]- For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

5. *“Repentance does not take away a Christian’s music, but raises it a note higher and makes it sweeter.”*

G. Despondency of mind.

1. *[Jeremiah 18.11-12]- Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.*
2. *[Joel 2.13]- And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*
3. *[Exodus 33.18-19]- And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.*
4. *[2 Corinthians 1.3]- Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*
5. *[Hosea 11.8]- How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

H. Hope of impunity.

1. *[Psalm 10.11]- He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.*
2. *[Genesis 6.3]- And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*
3. *[Revelation 2.21-22]- And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

I. Fear of reproach.

J. Immoderate love of the world.

1. *[Ezekiel 33.31]- And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.*
2. *[Matthew 13.7]- And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:*
3. *[Luke 14.18-19]- And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.*

XI. Prescribing Some Means for Repentance: Serious Considerations

A. Consider seriously what sin is.

1. Every sin is a recession from God.
 - a. *[Jeremiah 2.5]- Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?*
 - b. *[Isaiah 1.4]- Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.*
2. Sin is walking contrary to God
 - a. *[Leviticus 26.27]- And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;*

- b. *[Isaiah 30.11]- Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.*
3. Sin is an injury to God.
 - a. Here is *crimen laesae majestatis* (grievous high treason).
 - b. *[Nehemiah 9.26]- Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.*
4. Sin is profound ignorance.
 - a. *[Jeremiah 9.3]- And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith theLORD.*
 - b. *[1 Peter 1.14]- As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:*
5. Sin is a piece of desperateness.
 - a. In every transgression, a man runs an apparent hazard of his soul.
6. Sin besmears with filth.
 - a. *[James 1.21]- Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*
 - b. *[Deuteronomy 7.2]- And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:*
 - c. *[Titus 1.15]- Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.*
 - d. *[Isaiah 30.22]- Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.*
 - e. *[Zechariah 11.8]- Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me.*
7. In sin there is odious ingratitude.
 - a. *[1 Samuel 25.21]- Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good.*
 - b. *[Hosea 2.8]- For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.*
 - c. *[2 Samuel 16.17]- And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?*
8. Sin is a debasing thing.
 - a. *[Nahum 1.14]- And the LORD hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.*
 - b. *[2 Kings 5.1]- Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.*
9. Sin is a damage.
 - a. *[Matthew 16.26]- For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

10. Sin is a burden.
 - a. *[Psalm 38.4]- For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*
 - b. *[Amos 2.13]- Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.*
11. Sin is a debt.
 - a. *[Matthew 18.24]- And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.*
 - b. *[Psalm 139.7]- Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*
12. There is deceitfulness in sin.
 - a. *[Hebrews 3.13]- But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*
 - b. *[Proverbs 11.18]- The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.*
 - c. *[Judges 5.26]- She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.*
 - d. *[Revelation 9.7-10]- And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.*
13. Sin is a spiritual sickness.
 - a. *[Isaiah 5.20]- Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*
14. Sin is a bondage.
 - a. *[Romans 8.2]- For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*
 - b. *[Ecclesiastes 10.7]- I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.*
15. Sin has a spreading malignity in it.
16. Sin is a vexatious thing.
 - a. *[Genesis 3.16]- Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*
 - b. *[Zechariah 5.4]- I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.*
17. Sin is an absurd thing.
 - a. *[Judges 16.25]- And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.*
18. There is cruelty in every sin.

- a. *[Mark 5.5]- And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.*
 - b. *[Acts 16.27]- And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.*
19. Sin is a spiritual death:
- a. *[Ephesians 2.1]- And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*
 - b. *[Ephesians 4.19]- Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*
 - c. *[John 11.39]- Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.*
20. Sin without repentance tends to final damnation.
- a. *[Romans 6.23]- For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 - b. *[Proverbs 23.31-32]- Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*
 - c. *[Mark 9.48]- Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
 - d. *[Isaiah 33.14]- The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*
- B. The mercies of God.
1. *[Romans 2.4]- Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*
 2. What private mercies have we had?
 - a. *[Psalm 94.18]- When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.*
 3. What positive mercies have we had!
 - a. In supplying mercy.
 - 1.) *[Genesis 48.15]- And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,*
 - b. In delivering mercy.
 - 1.) *[Judges 2.4]- And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.*
- C. God's afflictive providences.
1. *[Hosea 5.12,14]- Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness. For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.*
 2. *[Jeremiah 8.6]- I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.*
 3. *[2 Peter 3.10]- But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*
 4. *[Daniel 4.27]- Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility.*
 5. *[2 Chronicles 33.12]- And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,*

6. *[Hosea 2.5-6]- For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.*
7. *[Judges 8.16]- And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.*
8. *[Amos 4.7-10]- And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.*
9. *[Isaiah 22.12-14]- And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.*
10. *[Jonah 1.14]- Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, OLORD, hast done as it pleased thee.*

D. How much will we have to answer for at last if we do not repent?

1. How many prayers, counsels, and admonitions will be put upon the score!
2. Every sermon will come in as an indictment.
3. *[Jeremiah 50.20]- In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.*
4. *[Job 31.14]- What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?*

XII. Means for Repentance: Other Means

A. Compare Penitent and Impenitent Conditions.

1. *[Luke 15.31]- And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.*

B. A settled determination to leave sin.

1. *[Psalm 119.106]- I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.*
2. *[Hosea 14.8]- Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.*
3. *[1 Samuel 17.45]- Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.*

C. Earnest supplication.

1. *[Psalm 147.18]- He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.*
2. Because it is His gift:
 - a. *[Acts 11.18]- When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

- b. *[Acts 7.51]- Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*
- 3. We must have recourse to God for blessing because He has *promised* to bestow it:
 - a. *[Ezekiel 36.26]- A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*
 - b. *[Jeremiah 24.7]- And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.*
- D. Pursue clearer discoveries of God.
 - 1. *[Job 42.5-6]- I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*
- E. Labor for faith.
 - 1. *[Psalm 126.6]- He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*