



REPENTANCE





How not to Repent

1

Do not repent just to escape judgment.

2

Do not depend on religious activities.

3

Do not isolate repentance from faith & works.

4

Do not be vague in your sin confession.

5

Do not compare yourself with others.

6

Do not differentiate between sins.

7

Do not slight the sins of omission.

8

Do not ignore reconciliation with men.

9

Do not mistake God's patience.

10

Do not stop repenting.



How not to Repent

Introduction

- The importance of this subject —

The Bible: Beginning to End

- A call for Repentance (Gen 3:9)
from “Ruin” to “Redemption” (Rev 22:17)

First Pages of the Bible: Calling Adam

Last Page: Calling *whoever thirsts*

- OT Prophets — Moses to Malachi
- Last of OT Prophets — John (Mt 3:2)
- Jesus Christ (Mk 1:15)
- The 12 Disciples (Mk 6:12)
- Peter at Pentecost (Jews) (Acts 2:38)
- Paul at Athens (Heathen) (Acts 17:30)

- Repentance is the most fundamental *doctrine of Christ* —

Heb 6:1

It's a serious matter to slight this doctrine —

2 Jn 9,10

Restoration of the doctrine of “Repentance”

will bring back the long-awaited Revival —

2 Chr 7:14

- Repentance —

The more we study this subject,

greater is the understanding of God's love (Rom 2:4)

i.e. His *goodness*
His *forbearance*
His *longsuffering*

- Repentance not only for sinners, but also for saints:
 - eg) 5 of the 7 Churches ...
“*Repent or else*” (Rev 2:5,16,21,22; 3:3,19)

Unfortunately,
too much on repentance of sinners;
too little on repentance of saints.

Hence this message, to both the groups.

How not to Repent

1. Do not repent just to escape judgment.

- The primary reason for repentance —
Mt 3:2 ... *FOR ... Kingdom near, not Hell near!*
Kingdom = Rule, Reign, Lordship
The right response: People *confessed their sins* (v6)
The wrong reason: Pharisees & Sadducees — “*But*” (vv 7,8)
- Examples of wrong motive —
 - Pharaoh (Ex 9:33-35) — When the thunderstorm stopped!
... he sinned yet more ... hardened his heart ...
 - Under Judges (Judg 2:16-19)
... they turned quickly from the way ...
This is called “*earthly sorrow*” 2 Cor 7:9-11
eg) Most of the modern conversions
- Three right motives for Repentance —
 - a) Fear of God**

Joseph	Gen 39:9
Midwives	Ex 1:17
Nehemiah	Neh 5:15
 - The root cause of wickedness —
Psa 36:1 ... *transgression ... no fear of God ...*
 - Forsake *filthiness* ... follow *holiness* —
“in the fear of God” 2 Cor 7:1
 - One thief to the other thief :
“Don’t you fear God?” Lk 23:40,41

It's because of this sort of conviction and repentance,
he could be saved instantly even in the last minute (11th hour!)

b) Love of God

2 Cor 5:14,15 ... What a love that He became sin for us!
:20,21 ... What an exchange!
"Constraining" to repent ...

Rev 3:19 ... *"As many as I love ... I rebuke"*

How can I grieve someone who has loved me so much?

c) Word of God

Rich man ... Lazarus ... 5 brothers
Lk 16:29,31 ... *"Moses & Prophets"*
God's Word is the final appeal!

Genuine conviction is by God's Word —
Psa 19:7a ... *"converting the soul"*
:11 ... *"warned ... reward"*

When we respond to the conviction of God's **Word**,
we have the help of the sympathising High Priest —

Heb 4:12,13 ... *"Word"* (CONVICTION)
:14-16 ... *"High Priest ... Throne"* (COMFORT)

How not to Repent

2. Do not depend on religious activities.

- The very first of the fundamental doctrines of Christ: Heb 6:1
Repentance from “dead works” — Not from sin!

This is an Epistle written to “Hebrew” or “Jewish” Christians:

“dead works”

symbolic religion of OT

Heb 9:9,10 ... *“until”* reformation (v10c)

Not the Reformation under Martin Luther, 16th century.

“Blood of Christ” vs. *“Blood of Cattle”*

vv 13,14 ... *Conscience from “dead works”*

- Apostle Paul, a classic example:

Phil 3:4-7

— *Circumcision* : ceremonial acts

— *Israel* : racial background

— *Benjamin* : family status

— *Pharisee* : denominational affiliation (sect)

— *Zeal ... Persecuting the Church*

: aggressive convictions

— *Law* : moral standard

Nothing wrong with these things;

but Paul repented from **depending** on them—

I *“counted”* as loss (v7)

I also *“count”* as loss (v8) i.e. ongoing

Our repentance is not genuine enough

as long as we depend on —

rituals ...

traditions ...

ceremonies ...

Religion is *“filthy”* rags —

Isa 64:6 ... *“all”* of us ... *“all”* of ours!

- What’s necessary is a change of *“heart”* —

This is the NT blessing:

Jer 31:31-33 — True religion in *“mind”*

Not change of Church/ceremonies

- Do not boast of ancestry —

Mt 3:9 ... *“within yourselves”*

We can **thank** God for a background of godly family,
but not **boast** of it or **depend** on it.

The other side of the coin:

You are **not** responsible for the sins of your

forefathers also —

Generational sins/ancestral iniquity?

Old Covenant: Ex 20:5

a) specifically for idolatry

b) only if you continue in *“idolatry”*

“hate” Me ... don’t *“love” Me!* (v6)

New Covenant: Ezek 18:1-4

If you still insist, see vv19,20

No need to confess the sins of the forefathers —

“Breaking the Chain”— This is an unscriptural practice.

An orphan child knows nothing about its parents!

Jesus: *The Kingdom of God is “THEIRS!”* (Mk 10:14)

... not “enter” the Kingdom but “own” it.

Their angels ... always ... (Mt 18:10)

- Do not substitute “ministerial involvement”

for “personal” repentance —

Be cleansed —

2 Tim 2:21 ... *cleanses “himself” ... useful for Master*

i.e. Personal repentance

eg) “flee” (v22)

“avoid” (v23)

eg) Isaiah was already a prophet,

functioning during the period of King Uzziah.

Isaiah saw the tragic end of Uzziah because of his pride—

He became a leper! (2 Chr 26:16-21)

Isaiah was the biographer of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:22)

Isaiah started looking at his own life —

“Woe” on others, so far! (Isa 1 to 5)

Now, “Woe unto **me** ...” (Isa 6)

- A hymn by Charlotte Elliot (1789-1871):

Just as I am — without one plea,

But that Thy blood was shed for me,

And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee,

O Lamb of God, I come!

How not to Repent

3. Do not isolate repentance from faith & works.

- Repentance is talked about in other religions also.

The difference is:

The Bible does not talk about “repentance” only;
but “repentance” **and** “faith.”

- Jesus

Mk 1:15 ... *Repent ... and believe ...*

Lk 24:47 ... *Repentance ... and remission ... His Name*

- Apostles

Acts 2:38 ... *Repent ... and be baptized ... Name*

Next Sermon 3:19 ... *Repent... and be converted ... blotted*

Paul: Acts 20:21 ... *Repentance ... faith ...*

(nominals & non-Christians)

- Doctrinal Teaching:

Heb 6:1 ... *Repentance and faith ...*

D.L. Moody: “Repentance is the tear in the eye of faith.”

A.W. Tozer: Repent: Exhale— Exhalation

Believe: Inhale— Inhalation

Together, it’s breathing!

If repentance does not lead to faith —

eg) Judas: Mt 27:3-5

He realised his mistake ...

He felt sorry for his mistake ...

He confessed his mistake ...

He even returned the money! ...

BUT, He did not turn to Jesus!

But Peter: Lk 22:61,62 (more grievous sin)

Their eyes met!

He believed the Word Jesus had spoken!

- Repentance must lead to faith,
and faith must lead to works!

eg) Prodigal son: (Lk 15:11-32)

— He realised ... *“came to himself”* (v17)

— He decided ... *“said ... I’ll arise”* (vv18,19)

— He arose and went ... (v20)

He did not continue with the pigs.

He had faith in his father! ... *“my” father* (v17)

He returned with a spirit of submission

“as one of your servants” (v19)

Repentance + Faith

= Leaving and Cleaving

□ Repentance ► Faith ► Works

Even in John the Baptist’s ministry—

Acts 19:4 (Repent and believe)

He insisted on **works** —

“fruits of repentance” Lk 3:8

“So” people asked him ... (vv10-14)

Attitude towards the poor — People

Attitude towards possessions — Publicans

Attitude towards position — Policemen

Another example —

Burning of magic books

Acts 19:18,19 ... (In Ephesus)

Jews + Greeks (v17)

Repentance message to the same Ephesian believers —

They backslided (Rev 2:5)

“Remember ... Repent ... Redo!”

- Repent = Right-about-turn
 - i.e. A “thorough” dealing with our lifestyle
 - eg) Lk 3:5 ... **Every** valley
 - Every** mountain
 - “Valley” ... Whatever is lacking ...
 - Wherever we’ve gone down ...
 - “mountain” and “hill” ...
 - Whatever is highmindedness
 - “hill”— smaller ones also!
 - “crooked” ... whatever needs straightening
 - “rough” ... whatever needs levelling up

This is a combination of “ups” & “downs” & “crooked things.”

- The necessity of rehabilitation —
 - eg) With a fractured leg after an ortho surgery,
you cannot run in Olympics the next day.
 - When a famous cricketer gets wounded in hand or leg,
he is given 1 or 2 weeks of rest!
 - eg) Captain Dhoni
 - Similarly, for addictive habits like drinking
smoking
pornography
 - Otherwise 7 other evil spirits — *“more” wicked ...* (Lk 11:26)
 - Strengthen the weak areas of your life (Heb 12:12,13)
 - You know where you are weak —
 - Give special attention to it!
 - eg) Jesus’ message to the Church in Sardis —
Rev 3:2,3a ... *strengthen what’s ready to die*

How not to Repent

4. Do not be vague in your sin confession.

- It's not enough to simply say —
 "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"
 The Parable of a Pharisee & a Tax Collector (Lk 18)
 - a) This Parable is not meant to teach us repentance
 — The purpose of this parable (v9)
 - b) Such general confessions may be alright for "sinners" —
 i.e. those not saved yet.
 But, for believers — 1 Jn 1:9 ... **"If we confess our sins ...**
- We are to repent with "*words*" — Hos 14:1,2
 i.e. specific confession
 v3 ... *Assyria ... horses ... work of our hands ...*
 Promise: v4 ... *"I'll heal their backsliding."*
- An **example** of dealing with sins specifically —
 1 Cor 10:6-11
 "lust ... idolatry ... immorality ... tempting ... murmuring"

 Even though they had the experiences of "passover" ...
 Water & Spirit Baptism
 Bible Reading ... etc. (vv1-5)
 These are "*examples*" for us — (vv 6,11)
- Use the sin lists in the Bible for self-examination —
 Prov 6:16-19 ... 6 or 7 things God hates
 Mk 7:21-23 ... 13 sins
 Rom 1:29-32 ... 22 sins
 Gal 5:19-21 ... 17 sins
 2 Tim 3:2-5 ... 18 sins

Not only these specific lists, but also thro' general reading of God's Word —

God's Word a "*mirror*" (Js 1:23,24)

It exposes my "*errors*" & *warns* me of them (Psa 19:11,12)

The 10 Commandments are a good list for self-examination—

Ex 20:1-17 1 to 4 ... sins against God

5 to 10 ... sins against man

Knowledge of sin comes thro' God's Law (Rom 3:20).

Today, not for condemnation, but for conviction & confession.

- Study the model prayers of Repentance:

eg) David (personal) — Psa 51

Daniel (national) — Dan 9:4-19

- Then comes a question —

Does not God **know** our sins?

God knows,

but confession brings **us** to a fresh & personal realisation of our sin and sinfulness —

eg) To Adam: "*Where are you?*" (Gen 3:9)

To Jacob: "*What is your name?*" (Gen 32:27)

To Samaritan woman: "*Bring your husband!*"

In fact, Jesus knew all the details...

"*5 husbands, etc.*" (Jn 4:1-18)

But Jesus wanted her to **speak** the truth:

"*You **spoke** truly*" (v18)

Confession of sin is not "informing" God,

but "affirming" what He already knows!

Sinning retail but confessing wholesale!

- Only specific confession helps us to “forsake” those sins —

Prov 28:13 ... *confesses and forsakes* ...

We will then understand the root cause of failures
and stay “reverent” (watchful) henceforth (v14)

A classic passage on specific sin confession: Neh 9

- Another reason why we confess our sins —

To what extent we realize our sinfulness,

to that extent we will love the Lord —

eg) Sinner woman — Lk 7:36-47

oil ... tears ... hair

Actually others might have been more sinful than her!

Her realisation of her sinfulness led her to true **humility** —

Washed His **feet** (v44)

Kissed His **feet** (v45)

Anointed His **feet** (v46)

- Can anyone say he has confessed “all” his sins?

No!

When we confess the sins we can remember,

and those the Holy Spirit convicts us of,

God will *cleanse us from “all” our unrighteousness.*

1 Jn 1:9

- In Revival meetings, we are simply called to “rededicate.”

But, “Rededication” is not “Repentance!”

Repentance must include sin confession —

eg) The famous Revival text: 2 Chr 7:14

“Rededication” is simply a comfortable/convenient substitute
we’ve invented!

How not to Repent

5. Do not compare yourself with others.

- Jesus told many stories and parables to explain a divine truth —

In most of the instances, He Himself gave the moral; or made the context explain it.

We often ignore it and start emphasising the peripheral aspects rather than the central truth —

eg) Tax-Collector & Pharisee (Lk 18)

This story is **not** to teach us how to be saved, **but** that we must never compare ourselves with others (v9)

The Pharisee's first sentence in prayer —

*"I am **not** like other men"* (v11)

God "abhors" such attitude —

Isa 65:5 ... He is stirred to wrath! ... *smoke* ...

Who were these people?

"Israel" (See v1)

- Our yardstick must not be others, but **God** Himself —

- Isaiah 6:3

"Holy ... Holy ... Holy"

"undone ... unclean ... unclean"

"FOR" my eyes have seen the King (v5)

Holiness vs. Hollowness & Hellishness

- Job 42:5,6 ... *"My eyes see Him ... Therefore"*

Yes, repentance is deepened by the **revelation** of God!

□ Peter: Lk 5:8 ... Miracle catch ...

"I'm a sinful man"

This is where modern revelations become questionable —

eg) Claiming, "I saw Jesus ... I visited Heaven ..."

But look at the Song of Moses —

Ex 15:11 ... *holiness* ... **then** *wonders!*

- Believers must not boast of their repentance comparing themselves with those who have not repented yet —

Because, Repentance itself is a "gift" from God —

Acts 11:18 ... *"granted" repentance*

2 Tim 2:25 ... *"grant" repentance*

Similarly, Jn 6:44 ... *Unless the Father draws anyone ...*

In **repentance** we simply cooperate with God —

It's just our **response** to the conviction by the Holy Spirit —

i.e. Man works with the power and enablement
which God imparts to him.

eg) John Wesley, looking at a drunkard
dragged along by policemen, said,

"There goes John Wesley but for the grace of God!"

— Another thing:

Most of us did not respond/repent when God called us
in the first instance —

We "almost" exhausted God's patience —

Rom 10:21

In anger God said: *"My Spirit shall not always strive
with man!"* (Gen 6:3)

- We must not think that our repentance
 “adds” to God’s being — (He is absolutely absolute!)
 Job 35:6-8 ... *if ... what ... if ... what ... if ... what?*
 Oh what a challenge!
- Paul’s warning with an example —
 Jews vs. Gentiles
 Rom 11:17-20
 Don’t be “*haughty*” but be “*humble*” (v20)
- Some of the striking statements made by Jesus —
 - “*The last first ... the first last!*” ... Mt 19:30 ... “*many*”
 - “*Publicans and prostitutes enter earlier*”... Mt 21:31b
 - “*You did **not** choose Me*” ... Jn 15:16a

Apostle John, known as an Apostle of Love, said:
*“We did **not** love Him first ...”* (1 Jn 4:19)

How not to Repent

6. Do not differentiate between sins.

- While we buy dresses, we talk about
 - S- Small size
 - M- Medium
 - L- Large
 - XL- Extra-large

There's no such thing with sin —
small sin, medium sin, ...

Sin is sin!
How? Why?

The word "SIN" —

Three major Hebrew words meaning:

- a) missing the mark
- b) revolting against the standard
- c) deviating from the standard

David used all these three in his sin confession:

Psa 51:1 ... "*transgression*"
= revolt against the standard

:2a ... "*iniquity*"
= deviation from the standard

:2b ... "*sin*"
= missing the mark

He saw "sin" in all its seriousness.

- Take the concept of "missing the mark"
 - While shooting, missing whether by 1 mm/1m/1mile!
 - Similarly, clearing of a well — 3/4th!
 - Similarly, missing the bus/train by 1 minute or 10 mts!

That's why, Rom 3:23

*"all have **sinned** ... fallen **short** ..."*

- A practical application by Apostle James —
Js 2:9-11

"whole Law ... one point ... guilty of all"

eg) adultery vs. murder vs. partiality

This was the main thrust in the teaching of Jesus:

He took sin by sin and explained it —

Mt 5:21,22 ... Murder vs. Anger

:27,28 ... Adultery vs. Lustful look

:33,34,37 ... Lie vs. Exaggeration

i.e. We must see sin as God sees it!

- This is one reason why the Bible uses various names to explain one and the same sin —

eg) Gal 5:19-21

a) sexual immorality:

"adultery ... fornications ... uncleanness

... licentiousness"

b) murder

"hatred ... contentions ... jealousies ...

outbursts of anger ... selfish ambition ... dissensions

... envy ... murders"

How serious "envy" is!

eg) The elder son was left out because of jealousy!

- According to "our" standards —

- David' sin was greater than Saul's;
but God rejected Saul and established David.

- Peter's sin was worse than Judas';
but Judas lost his apostleship
whereas Peter became an apostolic leader!

- Excusing ourselves with the so-called “smaller” sins,
we destroy our fragrance and fruitfulness —
Eccl 10:1 ... *little folly* ... fragrance
SS 2:15 ... *little foxes* ... fruitfulness

- Do not be satisfied if you are free from
the gross sins of the “*flesh*” —
Deal with the filthiness of the “*spirit*” also —
2 Cor 7:1 i.e. outward acts vs. inner attitude
King David brings this out in his confessions —
Psa 32:2 ... “*in whose **spirit** there’s no guile*”
Psa 51:6 ... “*truth in the **inward** parts*”

This is possible only by patiently waiting before God
for His searchlight to turn into the secret chambers
of our lives.

- The only differentiation between sins—
“*sin unto death*” vs. “*sin not unto death*” (1 Jn 5:16,17)
What is this sin?
It’s unbelief leading to idolatry (v21)

Similarly, “*sin against Christ*” vs. “*sin against the Spirit*”
Mt 12:24,31,32

Because, the Holy Spirit is God’s **last** voice to man!

God sent Prophets ... They persecuted them!
God sent His Son ... They killed Him!
God sent His Spirit ... That’s final!

How not to Repent

7. Do not slight the sins of omission.

- A broad classification of sins:
 - a) Sins of Commission
 - Doing what we should not do
 - b) Sins of Omission
 - Not doing what we should do

The world looks at the Sins of Commission more seriously than the Sins of Omission —
But God treats them alike!

- While talking about sin confession, we mostly deal with the sins of commission only. But our early Church Fathers —
 - eg) The *Common Book of Prayer* of the Anglican Church —
 - “We did not what we ought to,
but did what we ought not!”

They put omission before commission!
They had a right understanding of Repentance.

- The sin of the leftsiders —
 - Mt 25:41-45 ... sins of omission
 - “You did not ... You did not ...”
 - Eternal destiny sealed!
 - eg) The sin of the rich man: not commission but omission (Lk 16:19-31)
 - He did **not** build an outer-house for Lazarus
“lying at the gate ...”

□ He did **not** feed him
“... *crumbs from the table* ...”

□ He did **not** give him medical help
“... *dogs licked his sores* ...”

□ He did **not** chain his dog!

Hell! Not for what he did, but for what he did not!

- If we are overoccupied with the sins of commission,
it's actually a return to the Old Testament —

eg) The 10 Commandments — 8 out of 10... “*You shall not!*”
(Ex 20:1-17)

The other two — “Sabbath”
“Parents”

Even in this, there is a “*not*” in the Sabbath Commandment!
“*Thou shall not work* ...”

The “not’s” become “knots!”

A rebuke: Col 2:20-22 ...

Touch not ... Taste not ... Handle not ...

The Pharisees obeyed all these 9 commandments,
but made a substitute for the commandment
relating to parents: “*Corban!*” (Mk 7:8-13)

- That’s why the Prophets’ call to repentance essentially
referred to the sins of **omission** —

□ Daniel — Nebuchadnezzar Dan 4:27

□ Isaiah Isa 1:17,18

□ God’s chosen fast Isa 58:6,7

□ Amos Am 5:14,15

□ Jonah — King & citizens of Nineveh Jon 3:8

- Zechariah Zech 7:7 “former prophets”
(Zech 7:9,10; 8:15,16,17)
- That’s why John — the last of the OT Prophets
— his **first** admonition:
“Share one shirt”
“Share the supper”

- Holiness has two sides —
“Love good” — If not,
it leads to Sins of Omission
“Hate evil” — If not,
it leads to Sins of Commission

What came first in Jesus’ life? Heb 1:9
... *loved righteousness ... hated lawlessness*

We are not to separate one from the other —
Psa 34:14 ... *depart from evil ... do good*
37:27 ... *depart from evil ... do good*
Am 5:15 ... *hate evil ... love good*
Rom 12:9b ... *abhor evil ... cling to good*

There’s an imbalance all over Christendom.

— Then comes a question:
Is this not “salvation **by** works?”
We are not saved *BY works, but FOR works!* (Eph 2:9,10)

- Take time for self-examination regarding the sins of omission—
Repenting of the sins of commission —
Step 1 in sanctification
Repenting of the sins of omission —
Step 2 in sanctification
“He who is **holy**, let him be **holier** still!” (Rev 22:11b)

— Is this not a “social” Gospel?
There’s nothing like “social” Gospel
or “spiritual” Gospel.

The Gospel of Christ has two sides/two dimensions —

Lk 4:17-19

It meets the “spiritual” needs
as well as the “social” needs of man.

One without the other is like a half-baked bread,
or a bird which has lost one wing!

■ A hymn:

*Let not thy hands be slack,
The days fly fast
Lost moments come not back
From the dark past.
Then be not slack of hand!
Help thou the weak to stand!
To God and Fatherland
Give all thou hast!*

(See also Pages 248-250, 423-425, 560-562, 571-610)

How not to Repent

8. Do not ignore reconciliation with men.

- Repentance is getting right not only with **God**,
but also with **men**.

It's reconciliation with God **and** man;
because, our sins are not only against God,
but also against men —

eg) 10 Commandments (Ex 20)

1 to 4 ... Duty to God

5 to 10 ... Duty to man

That's why Jesus summarised it as —

Love God + Love man (Mt 22:36-40)

Equally important! ... *the second ... equal ...*

The symbol of the Cross

Vertical staff: reconciliation with God

Horizontal staff: reconciliation with men



- 6 out of 7 sins which God hates —
Prov 6:16-19 (perhaps all the 7)
- The repentance of the Prodigal son —
Lk 15:18,21 ... *against Heaven and against you ...*
- We frequently refer to John the Baptist —
His ministry: Lk 1:16 ... *Turning the hearts to God*
:17 ... *Fathers vs. Children*
- Repentance has 2 sides —
Rom 8:1 a) Forsaking the works of the flesh
b) Producing the fruits of the Spirit

- a) Works of the flesh —
Gal 5:19-21
8 out of 17 relate to interpersonal relationships.
- b) Fruits of the Spirit —
Gal 5:22,23
Almost all the 9 refer to relationships.

- That's why Jesus put reconciliation "*first*" —
Mt 5:23,24

This is **not** a **condition** for salvation,

but an **evidence** of salvation —

1 Jn 3:14 ... *We know ... death ... life ... because ...*

Exemplified in the conversion of Zacchaeus —

Lk 19:8 ... *false accusation ... restore*

— Apologise to those whom you have wronged.

— Return whatever you have taken illegally from others.

eg) Things from workspot

Illegal possession of properties

Reconciliation and Restitution abounded in the

Revivals of Wesley (1703-1791) & Finney (1792-1875).

Rare these days.

- The 2-sides of Holiness —

Heb 12:14 ... *peace with all men ... holiness*

eg) Paul: Acts 24:16 ... *Conscience toward God and men ...*

- Make a list for reconciliation.

Suppose he or she is an impossible candidate —

Rom 12:18 ... Exhaust all possibilities!

... Spare no pains!

Even if you are not able to reconcile with someone,

don't hold bitterness against him but keep doing good —

(vv19-21)

(See also Pages 98-100, 198-201, 255-258, 751-754)

How not to Repent

9. Do not mistake God's patience.

- We saw earlier that it is actually God who grants repentance; but He does not force us to repent. He respects our free will and choice. The Holy Spirit only “convicts” us; but repentance is our response!

Because this is so,
God often waits!

- The patience of God is only to give us sufficient time to repent—
Rom 2:4 ... *despising ... not knowing ...*
2 Pet 3:9 ... *not slack ... repentance*
:15a ... *longsuffering ... salvation*
- But God's patience has a limit —
This truth runs through the Scriptures from the beginning:
 - Noah's time: Gen 6:3 ... *My Spirit shall not always...*
(God's patience ran out / 1 Pet 3:20)
The Spirit is *resisted* ... (Acts 7:51)
The Spirit is *grieved* ... (Eph 4:30)
At one point,
the Spirit is *quenched!* (1 Thess 5:19)
 - Psalmist David's observation
Psa 7:11,12 ... *“God sharpens sword daily”*
 - This was the understanding of Solomon also —
Prov 29:1 ... *“often reprov'd ... hardens ... destroyed”*

- Prophet Isaiah's call
Isa 55:6 ... *"Seek while He may be found"*
- King Belshazzar's time —
God waited for the cup of iniquity to overflow —
Dan 5:2 ... vessels from Temple
:4 ... drunkenness + idolatry
:5 ... handwriting on the wall
- This truth became the lamentation of Jesus Himself —
Mt 23:37,38 ... *how often ... hen ... chicks ...*
- Our excuses for delaying repentance —
 - "My sin is not so bad as that of others."
Lk 13:3,5 ... (Pilate ... Galileans ... Siloam ...)
... Except you repent ... likewise perish
 - "God did not punish me earlier for this sin."
Eccl 8:11,12 ... No instant punishment
Acts 17:30 ... *Times of ignorance*
 - "I'm living under grace."
Rom 5:20; 6:1,2 ... *Where sin abounded*
Grace is not an Excuse but an Enablement.
 - "Christ is my Advocate, not Accuser."
1 Jn 2:1 ... *"THAT you may not sin ..."*
Psa 130:3,4 ... His *forgiveness* must lead us to *fear!*
Rom 8:1 ... *no condemnation* only to those
who walk in the Spirit...
 - "I'm special to God ... I'm indispensable."
No, God can bypass us as He did with Israel
Rom 10:20,21

- An oft-repeated truth —

“If you hear His voice TODAY, ...

Heb 3:7,8 ... *Do not harden your hearts*

:15 ... *Do not harden your hearts*

4:7 ... *Do not harden your hearts*

Quoted from Psa 95

- A warning —

The example of Esau

Heb 12:17 ... *tears (remorse) but no repentance!*

- If God’s TODAY is too early for your repentance,
your TOMORROW will be too late for His acceptance!

Don’t expect to repent at the 11th hour;

you may die at 10.30!

- A hymn by M. Farningham (1834-1909):

In the glad morning of my day,

My life to give, my vows to pay,

With no reserve and no delay,

With all my heart I come!

(See also Pages 747-750)

How not to Repent

10. Do not stop repenting.

- Repentance is never complete.

Prov 20:9 ... *who can say ...?*

It's reciprocated by Apostle John in the NT — 1 Jn 1:8

"If we say we have no sin ..."

This was written at the end of his life.

Similarly, Job at the end of his life — Job 42:5,6

Yes, Repentance starts with Rebirth and goes on till our death.

- It was to the "*saints*" that the apostles spoke of forsaking sins —

eg) 2 Cor 1:1 vs. 7:1

Eph 1:1 vs. 5:8,11

i.e. It's not a total bath but footwashing — Jn 13:8-10

The **feet** get dirty in our walk

though we don't roll in the dust!

Similarly, Christian life is a **Race** —

What are we supposed to do between the

starting point and finishing line?

Heb 12:1 ...

a) "*sin*" — what's wrong

b) "*weight*" — what's unnecessary

On the way,

we must not compare ourselves with anyone,

but only with Jesus ... "*looking unto Jesus*" (v2)

Even the surrounding "*witnesses*" of Chapter 11

are not our perfect patterns!

They all had their failures!
There are too many backsliders in this world;
don't look at them and be disillusioned,
discouraged and devastated.

- It may be easy to come out of Egypt;
but to take Egypt out of us is not! (Num 11:4,5)
In their hearts, they often returned to Egypt (Psa 78).
- Repentance deepens as we get more and more light —
Prov 4:18 ... *path of just ... brighter ... brighter ...*
As we grow in the understanding of God's Word,
we realize our sinfulness more and more ... Psa 119:130b
"The entrance of Your Word gives light"
- Salvation is much nearer than when we first believed —
Rom 13:11,12
Therefore, *cast off works of darkness.*
— This is the meaning of
Phil 2:12 ... *"work out your own salvation*
*with **fear** and **trembling**"*
i.e. continuous brokenness and non-stop repentance
The result: Festival joy and celebration
eg) David's repentance —
End of Psalm 51, verses 18,19
Repentance turns *mourning into dancing!*
- The confession of Paul —
Phil 3:13,14 ... *forgetting ... pressing forward ...*