

Understanding Repentance as a Way of Life

“28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. 29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. 30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” (Matthew 21:28-32KJV)

In this parable that Jesus gave and ask question we can learn things about sin and repentance.

“28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.” (Matthew 21:28 KJV) Here the man asked his two sons the same question to go and to work in the vineyard. God instruct each and everyone of us to do certain things for him and also to serve him. The vineyard is his church and the ministry that God had entrusted to us, that we need to serve him in it. The father here had no one but his two sons that he depend on them, that after him they will carry on the work in the vineyard, the place that they farm and reproduce the fruit that they need for their living, and for the living and the well being of others, and they need to invest their time and their effort and resources in it. So is the same for us today that we need to do our works and assignments in addition to do our assignments in the good work of God and in serving him.

“29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.” (Matthew 21:29 KJV) The first son said to his father, **I will not:** That is a sin because he refused and disobeyed the instruction of his father to go and to work in the vineyard. When we refuse to obey the instruction of God to go and work, and when we refuse the instruction of God to go and serve him in the particular place that he placed us or he wants us to serve, then we are sinning against God.

The Word of God also tell us here: **but afterward he repented, and went.** Afterward he repented as he changed his mind. Before in his mind was not willing to work, but now in his mind was willing to go and do the work and do the service that God wanted him to do in that particular place that his father had assigned him to do. * That what he did we called it delayed obedience, and the period from the time that his father told him until he did the work we called it a period of disobedience, that is why delayed obedience is disobedience. * That son is not far better than the second son, because he is not on the optimum for God who wants full and immediate obedience.

“30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.” (Matthew 21:30 KJV) The father gave the same command to his second son. God is just and he will give the same instructions to his people because he treat everyone equally and give them the same opportunity to obey and go and serve

Him. This second son, replied to his father and said to him, **“I go, sir”**, that he will obey the instruction and he will go and serve, but he did not go. Now the father was depending on the second son that he went and started to do the work but actually he did not, and that is so damaging because he depended on him but he did not do. The reason that the father went to the second son because the first one told him **“I will not”**; that is why he went to the second son because he needed to send someone to do the work in the vineyard. Now realize that when you promise God to do something and you don't do then you are causing damages to happen.

“31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.” (Matthew 21:31 KJV) Here Jesus asked, **“Whether of them twain did the will of his father?”** God finally wants you to do His will and to persevere in achieving that. Yes true the first son refused first and delayed to obey but finally complied to the will of his father. Here we can see the grace and the mercy of God on us that at any time we will accept and comply with His will we are again received and welcomed through Christ.

Now what he means with this: **“Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”** Not that God doesn't mind those who extort and corrupt, and not that God doesn't mind those who do immoralities. No, God shall judge all those who do such, but that He will welcome them when they will change their mind and repent and come back again to God. Those kind of people who among them those who steal and do crimes and immoralities are the rejected people in the eyes of the people of faith because they have sinful course of life. But those same people when they will repent and start to do good they will enter into the Kingdom of God before those who came to know Christ, who say to God and to Christ **“I go, sir”**, but after that they did not.

“32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” (Matthew 21:32KJV) Here the Lord explained to the Pharisees among the Jewish further about what he meant about repentance, and brought to them John the Baptist who came to them with the message of living in the way of righteousness, living in the way of doing the will of God, but they believed him not, and they repented not, they refused to get water baptized; being the people of God and who had said to God we will serve you and we will follow you, but they did not do. The same today as many as who are called Christians, called by Christ's name, they vowed to God and announced their loyalty but they refused untill now to comply with the will of God and His instruction to them to go and work and serve in His vineyard. Therefore as the publicans and harlots surpassed the Pharisees when they repented and renounced their sins, got water baptized and entered the Kingdom of God before the Pharisees, the same today, those who are living in sin, when they will repent, they will enter into the Kingdom of God before many Christians who are filling the churches but no repentance and no work of services are coming out of their hands and in their lives and they are not doing the will of God in their lives.

Repentance means the following:

1. Is to go back to what God had told you to do.
2. Is to accept to do what God had told you to do.
3. Is to go and do what you refused to do as the first son
4. Is to go and do what you yourself had promised God to do but you did not do as the second son.

God after the fall of man in the garden east of Eden, put the following on the woman and the man. Let us read the following passage to understand what repentance is and how God wants us to do and to behave after we commit sin:

“15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 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. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:15-24 KJV)

In this Scripture we can see the consequences of the sins that God put on the man and the woman, because they transgressed the instructions of God and ate from the fruit of the forbidden tree, the tree of knowing good and evil. *Therefore, when you sin and transgress against God expect to receive from God the consequences of your sins.*

“15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15 KJV) Here God put enmity between the serpent and the woman and between its seed and the seed of the woman, with such the woman and her children and descendents will be in a continuous battle and struggle with Satan and the demons who are fighting against man and his descendents. *That is why certain times we face struggles because Satan and its demons are fighting against us.* But here God promised that the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent, and that is the gospel that first time preached in the garden of Eden. Blood also was shed when God made coats of skin of beast or beasts that He slew, ***“21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God***

make coats of skins, and clothed them.” (Genesis 3:21 KJV) God with that had showed his love to the man inspite of his sin; He provided dress for the man who was naked and replaced the fig leaves that man sew to cover himself and that was also a sign, in shedding blood, for the work of the Messiah, the seed of the woman, that would come and his blood will be shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

“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.” (Genesis 3:16 KJV) God here put on the woman the consequences of her sin, that she need to pass through sorrow in her conception and her labor will be painful. Possibly before she fell into the sin it suppose to be these processes of pregnancy and labor without pain, but now after sin they will be painful. The other discipline that God put on her that she need to be under her husband that whatever she desires or wants she need to go back to him and ask him permission as he said here, ***“and thy desire shall be to thy husband”***, and for the man from that time needed to rule over his wife as he said here, ***“and he shall rule over thee.”***

“17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Genesis 3:17-19 KJV) Here the Lord placed over the man the consequences of his sin, because he listened to his wife and followed her and did not consider what God had told him to do. The woman was deceived but Adam was not deceived but he just delighted to follow his wife, ***“14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” (1 Timothy 2:14)*** The consequences that God placed over him, that the ground will be cursed because of what he did, that he needed to earn his living in sorrow and from hard work. The ground will reproduce thorns and thistles to make man's work difficult. His food will be herbs, that he needs to toil to plant and by preparing the ground, breaking the clods, sowing the seed, watering, and waiting for the harvest. Before he just was picking up fruit from the trees whenever he likes to eat but now will be in struggle to earn his daily food and need to labour and sweat to earn his living. *That is why you can see clearly now that when you sin and disobey God, life will be difficult and troubles will be started and you will have difficulties in earning your living.*

“22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:22-24 KJV) So God needed to send the man out of the garden of Eden to implement the discipline on man, to go and work the ground and earn his food, and for that he placed angels to guard the way to the tree of life so man will not be able to reach and eat from it and live forever. The angels of

God with the flaming sword is a clear message to the man that he cannot be saved through the tree of life because he cannot reach to it. Therefore he needs and should wait and put his faith and full trust on the coming Messiah. *That is what we need today to do, that we should repent of our sins, and put our faith and our full trust on Jesus and on His work of the cross to to be saved and have eternal life*

How the man responded to the instruction of God after he sinned? Did he repent or not? Now let us see the response of the man to the discipline of God and the consequences of sin that God had placed over him.

“20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.” (Genesis 3:20 KJV) That means man complied with the measures of God, that he agreed that his wife will go through the painful pregnancies and deliveries because he called her “Eve”, which means life. The Scripture tells us that women will be saved through child bearing: ***“15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.” (1 Timothy 2:15)*** The explanation that women will be saved in child bearing is because after the fall of man pregnancies and deliveries was the way to receive the Messiah who will be born from the woman. Also from the pregnancies and after deliveries woman need to care, nurture and disciple and discipline her children and raise them up as Godly children who live for God and fight against Satan and its demons.

Adam accepted the hard work and sure he worked in the ground that God commanded him to serve and to till to reproduce the food for him and for his family.

Let us read further about this family in ***Genesis 4, “1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:” (Genesis 4:1-4 KJV)*** We read here that man started to reproduce. Eve got her first son, Cain, and testified that she got him from the Lord and was a farmer the same profession of his father Adam. They got after him his brother Abel who was a sheep keeper, and both of them came to worship God with their offerings; these they learned about God from Adam and Eve who were working to comply with God and his commands and to follow his ways in bearing the consequences of their sins and lived waiting on the hope of the Messiah to come from their descendents to crush the head of the serpent and save them.

Certain people after they sin they keep remembering the good life that they had before they sinned, but they don't focus to do what God is asking them to do after their sins and bear the consequences of their sins.

My Dear and Beloved: You can learn the following from the message:

- You need to go back to what God had said to you.

- You need to repent and obey what God is telling you to do.
- You need to go back and do what you promised God to do.
- You need to accept the consequences of your sins and work out your salvation in the way that God ordained for you to go, through the narrow gate, with the help of the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Focus to do your new assignments and not on meditating on your life previous to your sin.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died for my sins on the cross and rose from the dead to give me eternal life.

Confess your sins now to the Lord _____. Confess the things that you refused to obey God, and commit yourself to do what God had asked you to do. Commit yourself to go back and do what you had promised God to do. Commit yourself to bear the consequences of your sins and be willing to follow the ways of God to work out your own salvation and be willing to go through the narrow way and not your own way or will.

Lord I put myself into your hand, I am willing to go along your plan of salvation to the whole mankind and I am willing to go and serve you and be in the place that you wants me to be. Lord I am willing to go through the consequences of my sins and do them.

Lord I pray for my Brethren who repented from their sins and wrong doings and who had committed themselves to serve you and do and accept the consequences of their sins and live their lives for you, Lord bless them and enable them and provided for them so they can continue to go along your plan and through the narrow gate. Lord I pray that they will submit themselves fully to you and start to reproduce the fruit of repentance and the fruit of the Holy Spirit that they will show Jesus in their lives and actions.

Lord we commit ourselves as a church to go and do the mission work that you wants us to do. Lord refill us with the Holy Ghost and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our ministry to go and preach the gospel and evangelize and reach the lost and make new disciples. Lord protects us and provides for us and enables us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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