

# Sincere Repentance



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Sincerely repenting of our sins and wrong attitudes can be done at any time—any day. This repenting includes confessing and forsaking any attitude; any decision; or any activity that is contrary to God's will and Word. Being in the will of God is the only safe place to be today—it is the only place of protection, and the only place where we can receive the benefits of the Atonement work of Christ. The way to be protected and to avoid trials, troubles, or even death is 1 Corinthians 11:31 “*If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*” If we are judged by the Lord, it is because we have omitted judging ourselves—then 1 Corinthians 11:32, “*chastisement [discipline, correction] follows, to save us from being condemned along with the world.*”

Judging ourselves means repenting, confessing, and forsaking any sin God has revealed to us. Satan can cause trouble if we do not repent of known sins. Proverbs 28:13 “*He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.*” It is a divine privilege to be kept free from trouble and protected from problems—all the result of truly repenting.

Satan is always trying to get us in an unscriptural position, and if he does—through our not knowing; because of disbelief, or some other reason—he can cause trouble for us. We must be ready to *admit*, and willing to *forsake*, any wrong attitude at the beginning of the error—which will protect us from the trouble the devil *had* planned.

If we are growing spiritually, we will avoid the unscriptural attitudes Satan wants to place in

us. Hebrews 6:1 “*Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ [basic Christianity] and go on to [perfection], not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God.*” We should not have to keep going over basic principles of divine truth.

The value of repenting is huge, because it not only keeps us *out* of trouble, but protects us *from* trouble in the first place. Everyone needs divine protection today—more than ever before. God's protection is the result of sincere repentance.

Jesus referred to some in Galilee who had lost their lives—Luke 13:1 “*whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices;*” and He then asked Luke 13:2-3, “*Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no!*”

It did not happen to them because they were worse sinners, He meant, because you are all sinners until a sincere repentance is made. Jesus then followed with, “*Unless you repent, you too will all perish,*”—maybe not by a wicked ruler, or a building falling on them, but they could perish by an illness, or some other way. Repenting enables God to protect us from harm or injury.

With so many vehicles on the road today, and with so many being distracted while operating vehicles—texting, talking, taking care of children, etc., tragic accidents are being reported more and more. We should never leave our home or drive a vehicle, without first repenting and asking God for His protection Psalm 121:8 “*The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in.*”

Every promise given to Israel is a valid promise to us today—if we will follow God's plan of sincerely repenting and putting our faith in the Atonement of His Son. Jesus said Matthew 3:2 “*Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;*” which means truly repenting that will Mat-

thew 3:8 “*Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.*” Matthew 3:8 “*Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God.*”

If we have truly repented, we can expect to receive divine healing. Jesus said at Nazareth, Luke 4:18 “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed.*”

The *Gospel* of Christ is the *Truth* from the Word. Those who are brokenhearted are those who are willing to sincerely repent. Liberty to the captives is freedom from the devil's influence, and healing from physical oppression. The preaching of John the Baptist was a call to repentance for the remission of sins—this opened the way for Jesus to heal those who had truly repented of their sins.

Wherever Satan has caused trouble, there is always a *spiritual* cause. Proverbs 26:2 “*A curse without cause shall not alight.*” When the cause is revealed, repentance is next, so the deliverance can be given.

No matter how serious the problem, or how unpleasant the situation, sincerely repenting will definitely place us where God can deliver us. Matthew 12:31 “*Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men*”—if they are willing to repent, of course.

An example of truly repenting of serious sins is Manasseh. When he ruled over Judah, he introduced idol worship—2 Kings 21:3 “*For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he raised up altars for Baal, and made a wooden image, as Ahab king of Israel had done; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them.*” 7 “*He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made,*” in the house of the Lord.

2 Kings 21:11-12 “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols), therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle.’” Manasseh 2 Kings 24:4 “filled Jerusalem with innocent blood.”

It was bad enough to be wicked himself, but he corrupted an entire nation, and murdered a multitude of innocent people. How anyone could be *that* possessed of the Devil is difficult to explain, but Manasseh *was* that evil. Because of these sins, God allowed the King of Assyria to capture him—who bound him in irons, and threw him into prison.

Manasseh, however, sincerely repented, truly confessed his sins, and humbled himself before God. The result of his repenting was, being released from the prison; then being restored to his throne in Judah; and finally enjoying peace and prosperity for years. *That* is a real manifestation of God’s love and mercy; and how willing God is to help anyone who truly repents of past sins.

The value of repenting is that it will bring divine wisdom and protection, if those who have sinned will sincerely confess and truly forsake them. Jonah proclaimed Jonah 3:4 “*Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned.*” It was a wicked city, so God had to proclaim a serious warning. If they did not repent, the prediction would come true.

When he heard the warning, the King of Nineveh believed God’s Word, and came down from his throne. He clothed himself in sackcloth [humility], and sat in ashes [repentance]. Job had that same repentant attitude and said 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.*”

The king said that everyone else should *repent, fast and pray for God’s mercy.* Jonah 3:8-9 “*Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn everyone from his evil ways, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?*”

That sincere repentance saved them from sure destruction, because Jonah 3:10 “*When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.*”

Jesus referred to this sincere repentance when He said Matthew 12:41 “*The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here*”—meaning, of course, Himself. As God in the flesh, He was infinitely greater than Jonah or anyone else. If a heathen king of a wicked city could repent and be saved, then anyone could repent and be saved.

If we have sincerely repented, confessed and forsaken our sins, we will have confidence that God will answer our prayers. We will be able to *act in faith* on the promise of His Word, and be sure of receiving all that we need or the answer to prayer God has promised to give. The *value* of repenting cannot be described in words—because the *result* is an inspiration of faith that enables us to trust God and receive the benefits of His almighty power.

1 John 3:20-21 “*If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart.*” If our own heart condemns us, how much more would God condemn us? We would not be able to act in faith, if there are things in our life to make right. 21-22 But “*if our heart condemn us not*”—as the result of sincerely repenting—“*then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of*

*him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*”

When God told Jonah to warn Nineveh of their need to repent, or the city would be destroyed, he listened to the devil—who convinced him that he would be labeled a false prophet—so he fled to Tarshish instead of going to Nineveh. A “mighty tempest” threatened the lives of everyone on board, so they Jonah 1:7 “*cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us.*”

Jonah admitted that he was the cause of the trouble. Jonah 1:12 “*And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.*” Even though it was an act of suicide, God’s mercy caused a 17 “*great fish to swallow up Jonah,*” which gave him another chance to repent and get back into the will of God.

On the third day of that predicament, the Holy Spirit inspired Jonah to repent. Jonah 2:8 “*They that observe lying vanities [regard worthless idols] forsake their own mercy.*” They that listen to the Devil, forsake the mercy of God, he meant. But Jonah said Jonah 2:9 “*I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.*”

Jonah had surrendered his life to God before, but he did not live up to it—he forsook the mercy God wanted to show him. Now, inside that fish, he decides never to listen to the Devil again, but always listen to God. *That* is really repenting—and a sincere repentance like that, will deliver anyone out of any trouble they are in—any time and any where!