

TRUE REPENTANCE IS MORE THAN SAYING

“I’m Sorry”

Mark 1:15: "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel."

Christ says now is the time to repent and believe the message he has brought forth. But what does it mean to repent? This question is often argued among Christians. However, the Bible gives a firm understanding of repentance as a complete reconciliation to God by refraining from one's own sins. *Acts 3:19 says, "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;" Acts 5:30-31: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."*

Christ is that refreshening sent unto us by the Most High to lead us to righteous living and eternal life. Christ the Lamb of God gave his life for us that we may reconcile ourselves to the Most High, so we in turn must refrain from our evil ways and cease to commit sin. In order to obtain true repentance through Christ, we must obey him. *St. John 14:15. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Proverbs 28:13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."* So in essence, a simpler meaning of repentance is a "change." This does not mean a change by our own individual definitions, but a change according to the laws of God. *I John 3:4 says, "Whosoever commiteth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."*

We can see clearly that when any commandment of God is broken, this act is called sin. We must also understand that sin is not permitted in the kingdom of God. *I Corinthians 6:9: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?..."* We all must consider the severity regarding our relationship with the Most High and Christ. God is not as compromising as many think he is. The Most High has shown enough mercy and grace to us by giving the life of his son Jesus Christ as a sacrifice to cleanse our sins. What more do we actually think the Lord should give us? We disobeyed his voice and it was our selfishness that moved us against him. However, his love for his people moved him to compassion to not destroy us, but to offer us another chance to restore our relationship as his children, and to ensure that Christ did not die in vain.

We must align our lives with righteousness and forsake our sinful deeds in order

to show true repentance to God. *Ephesians 4:22: "That ye put off the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind;"* Repentance demonstrates the term "born again." If anyone continues to walk in the sinful manner they did prior to receiving the truth of Christ, they have not shown true repentance nor love for Christ or themselves. *Hebrews 10:26 states, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."*

In the book of *John*, in the 8th chapter, Christ is made to judge an incident regarding a woman caught committing adultery. As the people attempted to stone her according to the law, Christ asked those who accused her, the following, "*he that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.*" Being convicted by their own consciences and hypocrisies, the people left the woman alone. Christ then told the woman (*John 8:10*), "...*Woman where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?* She said, *No man, Lord.* And Jesus said unto her, *neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*"

Christ gave this woman her first step to repentance by having her acknowledge her sins, but also by telling her that in order to truly repent, you must "**SIN NO MORE.**" How can one be truly sorry for their actions if they are consistently repeating them? As we develop our relationship with the Most High, it is strengthened through our faith and good works. As Satan tempts us to do evil to cast off our repentance, we must be strong within ourselves and overcome such temptation by applying the laws of God. *I Corinthians 15:56: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law."*

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SHALAM