

Sunday, October 2, 2011

Repentance

Repentance is the greatest of all things man can do on earth. It is the everlasting message of the church, and the purpose of the divine work of God within Her. Repentance was pivotal in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2). It was the main focus of the ministry of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 4:17) as well as the Apostle's (Matthew 4:17), and it is the main goal of any ministry.

What is Repentance?

Repentance is a continuous return to the bosom of God. The flesh always draws us towards the earthly, so our souls become laden with lusts. Then, we become unable to soar to spiritual heights or to the wonderful glory [of God]. Therefore, it is necessary for us to return and change our paths, get rid of all the burdens of sin, and begin to move towards the bosom of God.

Repentance has two essential elements to it: The first is on man's part, and is a relatively small effort. We ought to whole heartedly, and with fervent zeal, **distance ourselves** from loving anyone or anything that is not within the framework of God's love. And to abandon all tendencies and desires which is outside the circle of the heavenly Kingdom. We also ought to **move toward** loving God earnestly with an open heart, and pour selves at the feet of Christ with reverence.

The second element is on God's part as He grants us **grace for repentance** through His Holy Spirit. His grace is essential to repentance for without grace man cannot advance even one step towards the Kingdom no matter how much will-power he may have.

The Devine grace is the engine that moves the heart and gives support, joy, comfort, as well as physical and spiritual strength. The *Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered* (Romans 8) to deepen our relationship with God and to eliminate the gap that sin created between us and God.

The work of grace is continuous in our lives. Thus, repentance is a continuous life and a perpetual movement that strives and seeks to attain the Kingdom. Repentance is neither some words from the mouth that declares repentance, nor it is just to abandon thinking about sin. It is rather a permanent movement towards God, rejecting sin through prayers, for **prayer is the doorway to repentance**. Therefore, repentance starts in the prayer chamber with groaning from the depth of the heart, and being in a state of meekness, brokenness of heart, prostration. And pleading for God's grace to change and renew all of our thoughts, senses, emotions, and conduct such that our path in life is redirected towards the eternal glory.

Man can taste the powerful work of grace, if his repentance is proportionally sincere. The work of grace is miraculous, and when the repentant person experiences it, he glorifies God. Who can control his own eyes? Who can control his own thoughts? It is impossible for anyone! Nonetheless, if the divine grace works within us through the power of the Holy Spirit, we would have a great power that leads our lives to the safe harbor.

* Obstacles of Repentance:

* **Having a favorite sin**, despite knowing its eternal consequences in the lake of fire and brimstone where there is permanent weeping and gnashing of teeth and eternal condemnation.

* **Heedlessness, laziness and procrastination.** Therefore, we ought to place death before our eyes every moment and never postpone our repentance.

* **Mockery and joking around**, this is a major disease that man can have. It has now started to trickle into the church community and even within the servants. This leads to a gradual decline of the work of grace in one's life so one may lose the spirit of prayer, spirit of meditation, and the spirit of humility and meekness. Thus, the spirit of repentance would disappear from one's life. Therefore, let's be careful not to mock the divine scriptures, rites, or other people because this puts out the fervency of the spirit within us.

* The Fruits of Repentance:

Indescribable and **permanent joy, complete peace** that surpasses all understandings, **and continuous delight** in the victory over sin. Through meekness and humility we become filled with grace and we overcome the devil on earth, this leads to the everlasting victory and life in the kingdom with our sweet Jesus forever.

* Lastly:

If sin, though may be small, wounds Christ, then through repentance, prayer, broken heart, and tears the repentant person pours ointment that soothes the wounds of Christ and heals it. Delight

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