

21st CENTURY TRUTHS

Volume 1

(Need to Repent)

Issue 5

To Be Or Not Be Truly Sorry

Have you ever had an occasion to say or to be told “I’m sorry”? I believe it is safe to say everyone has been in both of these positions. However, have you ever considered the need to say “I’m sorry” in your spiritual life? But what do we have to be sorry about?

God has given us His laws and commands as our “rules to live by” much like an earthly father would give rules to his children. But, what is our reaction when rules are broken?

Let me give you an example. A father has set forth the rules by which his children are to live. The child (“Mary”) understands that it is against the rules to kick people. However, the father sees “Mary” kick her brother. When he asked “Mary” about breaking the rules, admits to kicking her brother and says she is sorry. However “Mary” kicks him again. She again says “I’m sorry” but immediately kicks her brother again saying “sorry” as she kicks him again. I believe you get the idea. Was “Mary” truly sorry for her actions? Many times in our spiritual lives we may act the same as “Mary”. It is easy to say the words “I’m sorry” but do we mean the words?

To be truly sorry for ones wrongs, they must have sorrow or regret for what they have done. The regret for committing a wrong will cause them to repent and turn away from performing the same wrong in the future. But, we have not done anything to break God’s rules or have we? Romans 3:23 states that “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” We further find that “sin is the

transgression of the law” (I John 3:4). From these scriptures we find that all of us have broken God’s law and therefore separated ourselves from Him. However, the word of God has given us many examples of those in the first century which broke His rules and yet said “I’m sorry” and repented of such wrongdoing.

In Acts 2, Peter was preaching Christ to the Jews on the day of Pentecost. He gave the prophecy which foretold the coming of Christ and informed the Jews that it was them that crucified the Son of God. In Acts 2:37, the Jews were cut to the heart (with sorrow and regret) and ask what they need to do. They were sorry but knew there was more needed. Peter said unto them “repent ye”, turn away from wrong/evil. The apostles furthermore in Acts 8:22 instructed Simon to “repent therefore of this thy wickedness.” - Don’t just be sorry, turn away from wickedness.

As we seen in Issue 4, you must believe the Word of God but his belief alone will not make us a follower of Christ. Jesus stated “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3) He immediately gave the same admonition in Luke 13:5. Just as “Mary” in the example above was not repentant, we have the choice not to turn from our wrongdoing. Do you desire to follow after the way of Christ and willing to repent of your sins? We are here to assist you if you have any questions.

Randy M. Meyer

REPENTANCE - IN THOUGHT AND IN ACTION!

In our modern and “progressive” society, it is almost unheard of to hear anyone actually use the word repent outside of the realm of religion. I believe one reason for this is that most people do not understand what it means to repent, whether inside or outside of spiritual matters.

God has said a great deal about repentance in His Word. The Bible instructs that “...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3); “Repent ye therefore, and be converted...” (Acts 3:19) “...but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” (Acts 17:30) “... that they should repent and turn to God...” (26:20). Therefore, we must understand what is expected when we repent in order to be pleasing in His sight.

We understand that each and every one of us “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” through breaking of the law of God (Rom. 3:23, I John 3:4). When it comes to our attention that it is our own sinful actions which have caused such separation, we will have the necessary “Godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation...” (II Cor. 7:10). It is this sorrow which will require of us to turn our lives away from continuing in sin. (Rom. 6:1).

However, Godly sorrow will cause a true repentance which is more than merely changing from sinful behavior. It is more than merely not sinning. True repentance requires a change of mind, a change of thought. If we truly have sorrow, we will change both our life and attitude.

Consider for a moment a child that is instructed by his parents to eat broccoli because it is a healthy food and good for his growing body. Out of his stubbornness, the child sets in his mind that he will not obey. His actions are also that of rebellion by refusal to eat as instructed. After consideration of the consequences, he complies with physically eating the broccoli but continues to hold to his rebellious mind/attitude. Has the child repented?? Absolutely not! He has no sorrow for his rebellion. Although his actions made a 180° change from refusal to compliance, his mind/thought has not changed.

The same can be true in our spiritual lives. One can stop committing sexual immorality (adultery or pre-marital sex) and yet still hold the belief that such behavior, although condemned by God, is still acceptable. A

“The Lord...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” II Peter 3:9 (KJV)

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“practicing” atheist can “repent” in action by discontinuing speaking out against God and still maintain his belief that there is no God and thereby sinning against Him. Although the actions in these examples are a complete turn around, the individuals have failed to repent as God requires. They have failed to have the sorrow about sinning against God which will cause changes in both their action AND heart/thinking.

In Acts 8:18-24, we find Simon desiring to purchase the power held by the apostles. Consider the admonition given by Peter, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” (Acts 8:22). At such time, Simon had not yet sinned in action but his thinking was wrong. Simon needed to have the Godly sorrow wherein he would change his heart.

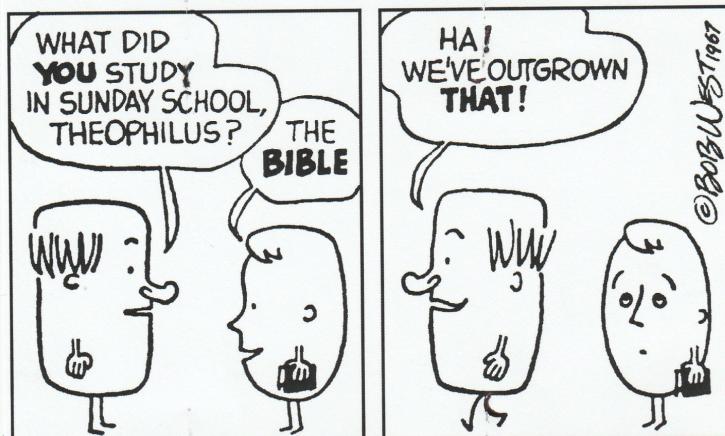
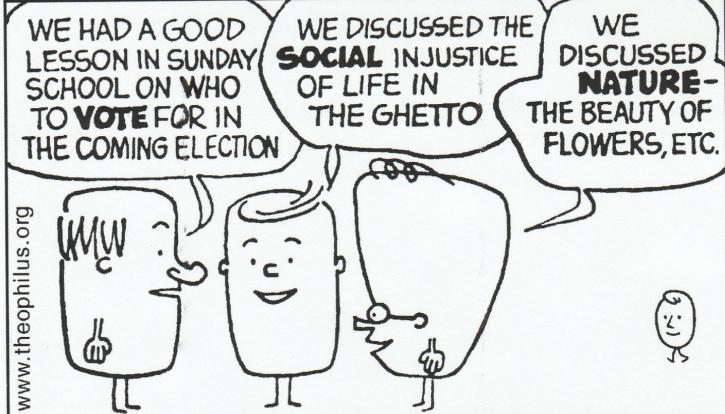
On the day of Pentecost, Peter placed the guilt of crucifying Christ upon the Jews to which he was speaking. (Acts 2). They were “cut to the heart” and asked what they must do. Peter said “...Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...” (Acts 2:38). If repentance was only a change of action, his response was senseless as they could not physically continue crucifying Christ. As they had sorrow, Peter was instructing them to repent, change not only their behavior but their heart/thinking as well.

As we have seen, to repent one must both turn their actions and heart toward God and away from sin. Therefore, the question to ask is “Have you repented?” You have now had an opportunity to hear and believe God’s word. Will you “repent ye therefore, and be converted?” (Acts 3:19) Please contact us at anytime to discuss being converted to Christ in both thought and action.

Randy M. Meyer

THEOPHILUS

Sunday School Lessons



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“The times of ignorance God Overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent.” Acts 17:30 (ESV)