

*True Faith is Repentant
leading to holiness*

*For godly grief produces a repentance that
leads to salvation without regret. 2 Cor 7:10*

The gift of faith results in repentance

Repentance and faith can be understood as two sides of the same coin. It is impossible to place our faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior without first changing our mind about our sin and about who Jesus is and what He has done.

Belief is not faith. Believing is the acceptance of ideas. Faith is the heart surrendered in obedience to God. *“The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”*

John 3:36

Faith and repentance are brothers. Faith produces repentance. Jesus said: *“No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”* (Luke 13:3) *“When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has also granted to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”* Acts 11:18

There is no true faith without repentance. The repentance of faith for the forgiveness of sins acknowledges that we are living in sin and stand guilty before God, knowing that the consequences of sin is the death sentence. We await God's penalty. Therefore, repentance is needed because we cannot save ourselves from sins grip.

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

2 Cor 7:10

Repentance results in a spiritual rebirth that begins the purpose of the restoration of God's holy image in us that is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. So real repentance is turning our life around to follow the path of Christ shown to us. This turning is accompanied by the indwelling Spirit who produces in us a fear of displeasing God. *‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it*

is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure.’
Phil 2:12-13

Therefore, repentance demands putting to death what is earthly in us according to the natural life we inherited from Adam. *‘For if you are living in accord with the flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.’* (Rom 8:13) So then our desire is to live the new life we have received in the image of Christ under the governance of the Spirit of God.

The fundamental requirement for all people is to love God with the whole heart, mind and strength. And because of this, to love our neighbours as ourselves. Believing in God is to obey all He has commanded. In order to love God with out whole being we must repent from living for ourselves otherwise we fail the first requirement because our heart is far from God. Loving God first and foremost is required if we are to have what is required to live with God.

This requirement has not been done by any except Jesus Christ. So therefore, all people are guilty of failing to do the minimum necessary to live in the presence of God.

This failure to honour God results in spiritual death and separation from the presence of God. And spiritual death resulted in physical death as separation from physical life.

The spiritually dead cannot free themselves in any way from their slavery to life according to the flesh, which is existence without the light of the knowledge of God. Life can only be regained by faith believing in Jesus Christ who, although innocent, died the death we deserve, in order that through repentance, we might receive the spiritual life we don't deserve.

There are those who call themselves to a religious life, of whom the Lord said: *"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"*

Matt 7:22

And others will be blinded by the devil. *"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them."*

John 12:41

True repentance cost us all we have in the world in order to follow Christ. We cannot have our own way and add Jesus as some kind of fire insurance to avoid the perils of Hell.

Jesus called people to repentance very early in His ministry.

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt 3:2

Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; Matt 3:8

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt 4:17

Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. Matt 11:20

Some want to focus on the gospel and leave repentance out of the message. But Jesus said repentance was needed to believe in the gospel.

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

In the last Day, Jesus will separate those called to Him from the frauds who claim to be His without repentance.

Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and left. And when the wheat sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also became evident. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; while you are gathering up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

Matt 24:30

Believing by itself is simply the acceptance of ideas. *"The eye is the lamp of the body; so then, if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"*

Matt 6:22-23

If there is no repentance we don't enter into the cross of Christ. Repentance has a great cost, our life in the world. We can only enjoy the grace of God in the Salvation of Christ by willingly paying the price to follow Him. Otherwise, we have manufactured a cheap grace that will not withstand the judgment of God.

"Cheap grace means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian 'conception' of God. An intellectual assent to that idea is held to be of itself sufficient to secure remission of sins."

"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline,

Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.” Dietric Bonhoffer

When many said they wanted to follow Jesus He made it clear that everyone should to count the cost if they wanted to following Him.

Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.”

Luke 14:25-33

Repentant Faith comes from God

True faith changes the resolve of the heart so the life belongs to God, and comes from God. Faith is a gift from God. "*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good*

works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” Eph 2:8-10

Faith is the heart drawn in surrender to God. Believing belongs to the believer who has been given the gift of a life changing miracle. Believing faith hears the good news of life in Jesus Christ, and the light of God has dawned in the heart.

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:44) This is because with faith, God has given a new heart. *“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”* (Ezek 36:25-26) So that we no longer live for self, but for Him who died and rose again on our behalf. 2 Cor 5:15

Faith trusts in God for eternal life. *'And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.'* Rom 8:28-30

'The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is the one who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But the one who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.' Rom 14:22-23

God doesn't call everyone to faith

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." John 6:44

The word John used for draw is not a gentle persuasion, rather it is used in other places as to drag, pull, haul, or persuade. Those the Father choose are unable to resist His will so they come to Christ. The call of God is irresistible and cannot be denied.

Where it says, no one comes to Me, it means others won't come, others will not be drawn. And this work of drawing is carried out by God the Holy Spirit. And He brings with Him everything needed to carry the chosen children on to eternal glory. So, believing isn't faith, faith is a work of God causing true belief, so that the object of belief comes to dominate the reason for living. While faithful believes and trusts in God, believing by itself only acknowledges information without surrendering the soul to obey and trust in God for all things.

Real faith cannot be produced by sinful man. Faith is a grace gift from God in drawing sinful man to His Son.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. Eph 2:8

“It is a sad deception that tells people they must produce their own faith. The soul that is dead in sin cannot resuscitate itself and begin to desire to live for Christ. To tell people they can come to Christ whenever they choose on their own terms is not in the Bible. Salvation is by grace through repentance. Saving grace has a great cost of personal denial. “Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance.”

Dietric Bonhoffer

The good news from God requires faith resulting in repentance from sin. The gospel is a call to leave the kingdom of men dwelling in darkness and to enter the light of the kingdom of God. It is a call to give up our declaration of independence, and to surrender to a life of total dependence on God. The gospel tells us that our independence makes us enemies of God, what we call sin, for sin means we wilfully refuse to obey and honour God as we should.

Therefore, the good news from God calls us to faith in repentance from self-reliance, to place our trust and reliance on God alone.

Faith means obedience as the way of holiness

Repentance is proved in obedience, and obedience is the road to perfection in holiness.

Obedience is actually putting on Christ but is only effectual after the transformation of repentant faith.

Faith is only realised through trusting and obeying God. Obedient Faith is the road to greater holiness, without which we cannot live in the presence of God. And holiness is essential because it is the glue that maintains our unity with the Father, Son and Spirit.

Faith that pursues holiness is also the daily compulsion to be separated from the world to be conformed into the holy image of Christ, because the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart of the faithful children of God to carry out His will. Faith is therefore God's determination to get us to put death that which is still earthly in us so we can be holy as He is Holy. Putting to death the life of the flesh is to obey the command of Christ to deny self and take up our cross to follow Him.

“If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will

lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul? Or what will a person give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.” Matt 16:24-27

Believing faith has received the good news, and the light of God has dawned in a new heart, because He has created a new heart so that we no longer live for self, but for Him who died and rose again on our behalf. The faith that changes the heart belongs to God, and comes from the grace of God. True faith comes from God with the desire for repentance and a constant turning from sin to live for holiness because it is not only a gift from God, but the will of God.

Repentance from sin is into holiness

Faith and repentance are conjoined twins growing in holiness.

Repentant faith is the experience of being set aside in holiness from the world of sin and death by God, for His sovereign use and glory. *“You were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”* (1 Cor 6:11) To be sanctified is to be holy so that we are able to have fellowship with God who is Holy, and set apart from the world to do His will.

Faith is imparted to the repentant soul by the Spirit of God to restore the image of God’s holiness. Faith is enabled in the surrendered heart by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. This faith becomes incorporated into the life of the believer so that faith is effectual in transforming the life it inhabits. This faith is continuously enlarged by the Spirit through obedience to His leading and teaching. The Spirit's presence brings the love of God

to be manifest in us. This love is our motivation that enables us to love God with all our hearts, mind and strength, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. This love causes a sense of fear and trembling in fear of offending the one we love most of all. And because He dwells in us, we are never separated from God's love because His love cannot be parted from His presence.

What God demands of us He provides the means

Because, as we walk in the darkness of the world, faith is eternally bound to God in Christ for all we need as we wait to be united with Him in glory. On top of all that, the faith that God gives to the repentant believer makes up for all that is lacking in the world, so that we lack nothing concerning the kingdom of God.

The true faith that comes from God is seen from the outset in obvious obedience to the commands of God, for God gives the ability to obey Him. *"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and are careful and follow My ordinances."* Ezekiel 36:26-27

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of ^[c]sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Rom 8:3-4

Faith knows the love of God so we can love as God loves. *'The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.'* (Rom 5:5) This love becomes the sole motivation for life. *"For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and*

He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf..... Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

2 Cor 5:14-15, 17

Faith results in the believer receiving all they need for holiness

"His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust." 2 Pet 1:3-4

God calls His children to live with holiness, so He births in them the divine nature and supports that life with the giving of the Holy Spirit, so that the believer is never separated from His enabling to be transformed into the image of Christ. Holiness is gained through obedience, no obedience, no holiness.

"Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behaviour; because it is written: "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

1 Pet 1:15-16

"Pursue peace with all people, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."

Heb 12:14

Being called out of the world to live for God in holiness means faith is also the daily compulsion to be separated from the world to be conformed into holy the image of Christ. Because the Spirit of Holiness dwells in the heart of the faithful children of God they have the ability to be holy. *'I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.'* (Gal 5:15) *'If we live by the Spirit, let's follow the Spirit as well.'*

Gal 5:25

'For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God.'

Rom 8:14

Faith is therefore God's determination to put to death that which is still earthly in us so we can be holy as He is Holy. *'If by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.'*

Rom 8:13

“Therefore faith, in laying hold of God's love, embraces in that love the promises of present and future life, and the firm assurance of every blessing as may be had from the word of the gospel. For faith, to be sure, does not promise itself length of years or great honours or abundant wealth in the present life, since the Lord willed that none of these should be appointed for us. Faith is content with the certainty that, although many helps in this present life may fail us, God never will. Faith's chief assurance lies in the expectation of the life to come, which God's word has placed beyond all uncertainty for us. Whatever disasters and misery may befall those whom the Lord has forever received in His love, His goodwill alone will constitute their complete happiness.” John Calvin

Faith gives all and receives all in Christ

'I have been crucified with Christ; I no longer live but Christ lives in me'

Gal 2:20

The crucified life receives the full blessings of God.

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His

will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He favoured us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our wrongdoings, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He set forth in Him, regarding His plan of the fullness of the times, to bring all things together in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things in accordance with the plan of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in the Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of the promise, who is a first instalment of our inheritance, in regard to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.’

Eph 1:3-14

Our perseverance to the end comes from God

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work among you will complete it by the day of Christ Jesus.”

Phil 1:6

Natural human belief won’t persevere to the end. *“And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will become cold. But the one who endures to the end is the one who will be saved.”*

Matt 24:12-13

God has determined that faith will succeed as we walk in the darkness of the world, because faith is eternally bound to God in Christ for all we need as we wait to be united with Him in glory. The faith that God gives to the repentant believer makes up for all that is lacking in the world, so that we lack nothing concerning the kingdom of God. We may enter the kingdom of God through

many trials and tribulations, but all these God uses for our eternal good.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all people. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4:4-7) And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”
Phil 4:19

“I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matt 28:20 10

"For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."
Rom 8:6-8

Repentant Faith is for holiness so we can live in the presence of God who dwells in us by His Spirit.

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behaviour; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"
1 Pet 1:13-16

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God.”

Hebrews 6:1