

*The Full Thought  
on Repentance*

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*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

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## INTRODUCTION

When the Holy Spirit convicts believers of sin, the individual's part is to repent. To repent means to have a thorough change of heart, mind, and consequent actions toward God and His Word. If we respond through grace and through the power of God with an attitude of true repentance, which includes a godly sorrow, we will turn from our sin without looking back. Having been turned, we will look to Christ as the sole provision for our souls in the area of our need.

Unfortunately, many well-intentioned Christians misunderstand the place of grace, which is God's unmerited favor toward sinners. Though it sets people free from the weight of sin, grace does not eliminate the need for repentance. The Word of God is very clear that repentance is required of anyone who wants to have an abundant life. To be saved, a person must change his mind toward God and the truth of God's plan,

and be willing to forsake sin and iniquity when God turns him.

Like salvation, grace is a gift. It always goes toward an individual, and the only requirement is to receive it. But neither grace nor salvation can have an effect on a soul that has not repented. Since the natural mind cannot comprehend the things of God, we must be turned from our old ways to see the Lord and be saved. Then, we need to always be available to be turned so our minds can continue to focus on Christ and His Word. Only then can a real change occur in our souls.

As this booklet shows, repentance will lead us into tremendous blessings from God. When our minds are rightly related to Him, we can enjoy His visitations, receive the impartation of His breath, and become the manifestation of His life to a world that needs to turn to, and be turned by, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 20:19-23).

*Chapter One*

## CONVERTED TO GOD'S VIEWPOINT

"I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God.

"Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." (Jeremiah 31:18-19).

"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;

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you" (Acts 3:19-20).

The command in these verses is very clear: Repent—change your mind to God's divine

viewpoint. Change your mind because the Word of God is quick and powerful in what it says and what it can do. Then you will be converted, your sins will be blotted out, and you will enjoy times of refreshing through the presence of God.

Initially, repentance is what brings us to salvation. But after we are saved, we need to repent daily to maintain a close walk with God. The Holy Spirit, who lives in every born-again Christian, is very sensitive to anything in us that is not right with God. Therefore, if we sin, the Holy Spirit will convict us of the truth. We need to have God turn us so that we can repent and turn our minds from self and sin to the Savior and His Word.

Isolated Christians in every congregation do not deal with their sins according to the Word of God. They depend upon the gift of imputed righteousness but without repentance. Repentance is also a gift. It is something God offers to sinners as a way to restore fellowship. It does involve a change of mind, a change of speech, a change of habits, a change of thinking, and a change in relationships. If these changes are not evident, even though a person may confess that they have repented, then there has been no repentance.

## *Heed the Whole Counsel of God*

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

“Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

“Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-20).

The Bible conveys a strong warning in these verses, loudly and clearly. Based upon the Word of God, how can a man or woman live in forni-

cation or adultery and think that they are saved? No Christian can get away with such a thing without being heavily disciplined by God. Maybe you go to church, sing hymns, and love your preacher, but if you are living with someone out of wedlock (or otherwise unlawfully), you may not be saved. The Bible makes it crystal clear that we are not even to fellowship with those who do such things. We can minister the Gospel to them but that is to be the extent of our contact.

What do these people need? Repentance.

We have been commanded to preach the whole counsel of God. That means we are to speak out against those who live continually in sins such as fornication. God has given us quite a catalog of what is unacceptable to Him. If I were living in any one of the sins mentioned in those verses above, it would cause me to think seriously about my eternal destiny.\*

For the purpose of definition, idolaters are those who put anything above the Lord Jesus Christ. Adulterers are married people having sex outside of their marriage. Fornicators are single people having sexual relationships without being married. Also included in the list are the effeminate, speaking of homosexuals, and

those who abuse themselves.

I want to make this very clear: I love grace. I love God. And I have to tell you that the glorious gospel of grace will never be glorious to anyone who does not repent. We will minister and offer help to anyone who is weak and desires to be set free. But the Cross is the only place we can meet. This pulpit will not be guilty of fellowshiping with those who will not repent.

Furthermore, true repentance also means to change our minds about foolish jesting and suggestiveness. We cannot receive honest-to-goodness refreshing from the presence of God unless these sins are repented of. Once there is repentance, we can receive the gift and the power of the glorious gospel of grace. God then can indeed turn us, beginning on the inside, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

*\*We strongly suggest reading The Great Detective: Sin, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1998, as well as Eternally Secure and The Reality of Hell, both by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 2002.*

## *Chapter Two*

# THE VITALITY OF VISITATIONS

“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old” (Psalm 44:1).

“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands” (Psalm 143:5).

The times of God’s visitation are so precious. Divine effects come through divine causes in a divine visitation. A divine visitation will not come through emotionalism, through sincerity in church attendance, or through fellowship with other believers, as important as that is. Divine visitations only come when we thoroughly comprehend the meaning of Acts 3:19: “repent...and be converted.”

When a Christian congregation commits itself to preaching the entire counsel of God as a Word of God ministry of revival, then God can pour forth a visitation. The Word comes forth

with its divine invitation, and immediately we can receive divine impartation to live in divine participation.

When the Lord visits, we do not receive just ceremonial, properly tuned, but dry, evangelical messages. Instead, we enjoy spontaneity in every presentation as we receive precisely the revelation, the inspiration, and the illumination God communicates at that moment of visitation. It is not that we enter into something we have never entered into. The visitation enables us to advance in the inspiration and growth of what we have already received. This is what revival is meant to do—leading us and advancing us as we are quickened by the Word of God.

### *Miracles Do Happen*

Miracles happen when members of the church begin to operate in repentance, and they purpose to dwell together in unity, in the bond of peace (Psalm 133:1; Ephesians 4:3).

The church was doing great. We had just started our Bible college, souls were being saved daily, and at every service we had a full house. During one of those services, I noticed some activity in one of the aisles, and when I looked down, I saw a woman slumped over. Two nurses

who were sitting nearby attended to her, and both of them said they could find no pulse. I was stunned. Her husband was obviously fearful and distraught. At that point in the visitation, God said, "Tell the congregation to sing."

That congregation began to sing like they had never sung before. The presence of the Lord was so real. There was no confusion. Everyone had turned their minds toward Jesus and the whole congregation was singing then praying. I can only describe what happened next as divine participation through a divine impartation because of the visitation of the Lord. As we prayed, warmth began to return to this woman's body. The Lord Jesus resuscitated her. With no lingering weakness, she marched up to the pulpit and sang, "Because He Lives"!

When our focus is on Christ, there is no fragmentation. There is a time of great refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Then comes the time of impartation, and by faith we enjoy our participation in the visitation of the Lord Jesus.

After a fantastic time of worship, the entire congregation became very still as the overwhelming presence of God took over the service. Many people sensed what they described as penetrating heat, accompanied by the sound

of a low roar. For those of us who opened our eyes, it was evident that no person in the room was singing, and yet we heard the sweetest, most magnificent chorus that could only come from the voices of angels.

What led to this kind of visitation? It was no coincidence. It was because of repentance. People's minds were turned from petty complaints and natural dispositions to become one in divine participation with the plan of God for that moment.

### *Specific Gifts, Specific Results*

Another memorable visitation came during my first trip to Finland. Speaking to the audience with a group of people who did not understand English, the Holy Spirit said to me, "You have got to get up and speak in another language."

I did not believe or participate in an exercise of the gift of tongues. I was frightened. I had to repent. I had to change my mind about this gift and allow God to use it through me. So on that night I spoke perfect Finnish for several minutes. My interpreter, a graduate of one of Finland's top colleges, said that it was absolutely perfect Finnish. I didn't know what I was doing

until I heard the interpreter say, "Thus saith the Lord from the Finished Work glory of the throne of Jesus Christ."

God gave me definition that night, and I learned that "tongues" does not refer to gibberish and untranslatable babblings. "Tongues" are national languages. God gives this gift at times when people need to get saved. They are given for the sake of those who believe not (see 1 Corinthians 14:22).

During the feast of Pentecost, in Acts 2:4, which commemorated the giving of the Law (Exodus 23:16), the Holy Spirit descended with fire. Those who gathered in Jerusalem for the feast heard the Gospel in their own national languages. In Finland that day, the most important thing was that souls were getting saved. In a fellowship of oneness, the corporate joy of happiness and abundance and obedience to the Word of God, God supplied, pure as gold, the national Finnish tongue to this preacher. There was a great visitation of the Lord Jesus in the midst of His frail and weak, yet obedient and repentant people.

*Chapter Three*

## OVERWHELMED BY REVELATION

“And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?” (Isaiah 10:3).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

“Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:11-12).

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

The visitation of God comes to churches like ours, where the people are willing to count the

cost and accept the price that has been paid for them to the glory of the One who did it all. When it happens, God's glory invades our humanity and invades our souls, and the Word of God invades our minds. The Holy Spirit has already conquered death in us through our co-crucifixion and co-burial in Christ, and the habitation and impartation of God Himself begins to move in us.

Then, we experience something more than a divine visitation and a heavenly impartation. As we cooperate with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we enter into a divine presentation: that is, we present ourselves as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1). It is a presentation based on mercies that are new every morning and compassion that does not fail (Lamentations 3:22-23).

God overwhelms us in our personal faith through the experience of His presence, the invasion of His divinity in our very humanity. The abundant life fills the capacity of our souls through the human spirit and the new heart. We experience what it means to say, "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21).

## *The Danger of a Double Life*

People who refuse to repent simply do not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by what God is doing. Isolated individuals come to church and never really grasp the truth of the Word and their resurrection with Christ. They come from some pretty deep places (Psalm 40:2), and they don't realize where God has placed them. Though they have been seated above, in Christ (Ephesians 2:6), and are hid in the midst of Christ's Body on the earth, they don't participate in the visitation of the Spirit or allow themselves to be baptized as a member in particular (1 Corinthians 12:27).

Let me reiterate. God does not wink at adultery, fornication, masturbation, and pornography. You may think He does because of His great grace. But the Word says otherwise.

We must never taste the grace of God and turn it into lasciviousness (Jude 4). We are not to profess to know God and then in our works deny Him (Titus 1:16). We are not to receive the grace of God in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1).

Grace is more than just something we are given. It leads us to a Person whom we live in, fellowship with, and commune with, in honor

and love, publicly and privately. We worship and love the One who is indeed grace and truth. And when we have a heart of repentance, ready to be turned the moment the Holy Spirit convicts us, then we will receive His fullness (John 1:16). Then we can enjoy the riches and treasures of heavenly places.

### *The Anointing Comes Down from the Head*

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

Some Christians need to allow God to change their minds concerning assembling together. We cannot afford to forsake the assembly of believers. We must choose to be in the midst of God’s revival so that we can have a part in every soul that is saved.\* Everything that goes on in the local assembly is important because Jesus Christ is the Head. The assembly is where the Head communicates through the Word and a pastor-teacher to the members of His Body. These members receive Christ’s mind, understand His interpretation, and enjoy His visitation as they sit under the presentation of the Lord Jesus.

God inhabits contrite and humble spirits, re-

viving them and taking away any preoccupation with situations, circumstances, details, and relationships. I thank God for those who do repent and use rebound in the earnest fervency of truth when they fail. God has divine promotions for these faithful believers. Those who humble themselves will be elevated.

Our relationship is first with Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is in us. We sup together. We talk. He listens to our prayers. He gives us divine guidance by His Holy Spirit so we do not go back into bondage (Romans 8:14-15). He counsels us with His precious Word so we do not wander into iniquity (Psalm 119:133). He is indeed our Lord, our God, our King, our Lover, our Savior. He is the Lord Jesus, and His name is Holy.

When we understand this, our capacity for the anointing of God will increase. First, every one of us must be taught what an anointing is.\*\* No one can ever become a disciple without understanding that the anointing, the special unction of the Holy Spirit, comes down from the Head and into our hearts, breaking every yoke of bondage (Isaiah 10:27). We don't have to live in our yesterdays—the faded glory of our victories or the harsh memories of our failures. The

problems of our will are overcome as God comes in.

“Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit” (Ecclesiastes 7:8)

“When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

“Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

“The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

“Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way” (John 4:47-50).

“...Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

“And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet” (Luke 11:28-29).

God moves us; He turns us toward the truth and draws us to Himself, and we change our minds concerning our sinful ways. He has

brought into our midst a Word of God revival that stirs us to be occupied with the Person of Jesus Christ, morning, noon, and night. This revival brings real repentance. Humble, broken people become so one with Christ that there is nothing between them but God. They simply walk on, in the power of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

*\*To understand blessings we receive by association with the local assembly, read The Bema Seat: Presented in Joy or Grief?, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1996.*

*\*\*Living an Anointed Life, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1999, explains the importance and the availability of God's anointing for every believer.*

## CONCLUSION

It is so important that as Christians we avoid fragmentation. We cannot afford to live in bits and pieces of the thoughts of God. I have presented God's Word the best that I know how. The only reason I am able to do it is because of the Lord's habitation, impartation, and manifestation. I pray it will be used to mobilize His Spirit of love in our hearts.

Raise your hands to our Lord, and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Respond to His initiations. When the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin—whether it is in thought, word, or deed—repent and rebound immediately. Do not allow laziness and slothfulness to control you. Instead, repent. Turn your mind toward the Lord and enter into the divine truth of the light of His Word. Let God show you what sin is and how it keeps you from being revived in the refreshment of His visitations.

Experience the Word of God revival that is

available to us in these last days. It is the revival that glorifies Christ. He created the universe by His Word. His Word holds all things together (Hebrews 1:3). His Word is forever settled in Heaven. But that same Word is also living, abiding, and dwelling in us. Honor it, submit to it, walk in the light of it. Obey it. Give it out to others.

*Father, we commit our souls to You. With Your divine life flowing through our human spirit, You have set us free from depression, set us free of worry, and set us free of living in sin. We give You praise as we are made ready to take Your Gospel to our Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Bless us in the fervency of conviction through Your Word and Your Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.*