



Repentance

Luke 18:10-14 tells about two men who went to the same place for the same purpose, but the result was dramatically different. The reason can be summed up in one word: repentance. Today we look at chapter 3 in our series on the book *Steps to Christ*. (There's a lot in this chapter that we won't have time to cover, so I strongly encourage you to pick up a copy of this book and read it.)

Acts 2:37, 38 — Repentance is a very important aspect for somebody who wants to get to know Jesus. In fact, on the Day of Pentecost when the people were brought under conviction by the Holy Spirit and asked, “What shall we do?”, the first word of Peter’s answer was “repent”. (Peter repeated this theme in Acts 3:19.) “Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 12)

“There are many who fail to understand the true nature of repentance. Multitudes sorrow that they have sinned and even make an outward reformation because they fear that their wrongdoing will bring suffering upon themselves. But this is not repentance in the Bible sense. They lament the suffering rather than the sin.” (*Ibid*, p. 12)

Acts 5:31 — Jesus gives *both* repentance *and* forgiveness. So the sinner need not wait for repentance before coming to Jesus. In fact, he must come to Jesus first to receive repentance, because He is its only true Source.

“It is true that repentance does precede the forgiveness of sins; for it is only the broken and contrite heart that will feel the need of a Savior. But must the sinner wait til he has repented before he can come to Jesus? Is repentance to be made an obstacle between the sinner and the Savior? . . . It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ that leads to genuine repentance. . . . We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.” (*Ibid*, pp. 14, 15)

Psalm 32:1-5 — David was a man who had found true repentance; he testifies that although facing your sin is hard, the result is a tremendous blessing.

Psalm 32:6 — David encourages everybody to find the blessing in repentance. Let's take a closer look at how David repented.

Psalm 51:1-3, 10-12, 16, 17 — Notice in this repentance that David does not try to whitewash his sin; he recognizes it and wants to be cleansed of it so that his connection with God is not broken.

John 12:32 — Come with me to the foot of the cross; notice that our sins are not a small thing to God; they cost Jesus His life! For it is when Christ is “revealed to the sinner as the Savior dying for the sins of the world” that “the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance. In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition in the soul.” (*Ibid*, p. 15)

Luke 7:41-43, 47 — “We have been great sinners, but Christ died so that we could be forgiven. His priceless sacrifice is enough to cover our sins. Those who are forgiven most will love Him most. They will be closest to Him in heaven and they will praise Him for His great love and infinite sacrifice.

“When we fully understand the love of God, we best see how terrible sin is. When we see how far He has reached down to touch us, we understand something of Christ’s sacrifice. Then we are truly sorry for sin, and our hearts are full of love for Him.” (*Steps to Jesus*, p. 37)

“If you see your sinfulness, do not wait to make yourself better. How many there are who think they are not good enough to come to Christ. Do you expect to become better through your own efforts? ‘Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.’ Jeremiah 13:23. There is help for us only in God. We must not wait for stronger persuasions, for better opportunities, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing of ourselves. We must come to Christ just as we are.” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 18)



The third step in order to have a relationship with God and be ready to meet Him is to look to the cross of Jesus and see what your sin cost Him. Then ask Jesus for the gift of repentance.