

Fruits Proper for Repentance

a living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

Please read and study each of the passages cited in this message and ask yourself, "Have I repented of all my sins? Have I properly confessed to God who knows my heart? Have I properly informed my brethren and appealed to them for their prayers and support in my efforts to please God? Does my daily life demonstrate my repentance from sin toward God?"

Gilbert Alexander

We appreciate the words of admonition, encouragement, and instruction given by Brother Alexander in his articles. We are blessed to still have them available for publication so that another generation may be taught by his words. Notice that he always exhorts the readers to apply the lesson to themselves. BEW

Words of Life

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Words of Life

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"
John 6:63

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Quote

Luke 13:3

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish."

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30AM
Morning Worship 10:30AM
Evening Worship 5:00PM

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00PM

Fruits Proper for Repentance

When multitudes of Jews came out to John the Baptist to be baptized, he urged them to bear fruits worthy of repentance. *Luke 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.* He was making it clear to them that if they were truly repentant toward God, their lives would have to show that change in mind and behavior. How do we show repentance toward God today? What means do we have to show to God and men that we have truly had a change of mind motivated by godly sorrow for our sins? What do the scriptures teach us?

Common to repentance of sins is confession of that sin to

God, and to men when it is essential or helpful to do so. After David's sin with Bathsheba he confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord. *2 Samuel 12:13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.* An even more impressive confession is found in *2 Samuel 24:10. And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto Jehovah, I have sinned greatly in that which I have done: but now, O Jehovah, put away, I beseech thee, the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.* (Continued on page 2)

God's acceptance again of wayward Israel was based upon their humbling themselves, accepting their guilt before God, and confessing their sins. *Leviticus 26:40-42 And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, 41 I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; 42 then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*

As Christians, when we err from the truth and become unfaithful in our service to God, we are instructed to repent, to confess our sins, and to pray to God that we might be forgiven. *Acts 8:22-24 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. 23 For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. 24 And Simon answered and said, Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* In this passage, and in others, we are taught to pray for one another that our sins may be forgiven. *James 5:16 Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man*

availeth much in its working. Even though God knows our hearts, whether we are repentant or not, we are taught to

confess to Him. How important it is then, to our brethren, who cannot know our hearts except by our words and deeds, that we confess our sins to one another and make our repentance known to them. *Luke 17:3-4 Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 4 And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.* In times when our sin is between us and God alone, we are privileged to seek help from faithful brethren in times of weakness and spiritual need of advice and encouragement.

Another part of the fruits of repentance is the changed life that it brings. We stop wrongdoing and turn away from those things and associations that are corrupt in their influence. We obey the Lord's commandments for worship and service, for duty to the local church, for daily living in soberness, righteousness, and godliness. *Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.* We cultivate an appetite for spiritual things in order to draw near to God and grow up into Him who is the Head. *1 Peter 2:1-3 Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye*

may grow thereby unto salvation; 3 if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: Ephesians 4:15-32 but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; 16 from whom all the body fitly framed

and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love. 17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; 19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye did not so learn Christ; 21 if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: 22 that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; 23 and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. 25 Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need. 29 Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and an-

ger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. In the course of time, it is not hard to see true repentance by the fruit that it bears and the zeal that it stimulates in the lives of those who have truly turned their hearts from the world to serve the true and living God. *1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 how that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake. 6 And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit; 7 so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything. 9 For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve*

(continued on page 4)