

REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

There is a big difference in *repenting* and merely *reporting* that one has sinned. This is a much abused and seemingly misunderstood subject. Without a thorough and working knowledge of what repentance truly is, how shall one or even a congregation know if one has repented?

A false concept of repentance can be illustrated with a burglar being caught in the act of stealing. Though the burglar may acknowledge that he was caught in the store when he should not have been there, this is not to say that he had repented. I might add, nor does it prove that he has confessed, as per the teaching of the Lord which allows God to forgive (1 John 1:9). Allow me to supply another illustration. Let us say that a sister's behavior has been untoward or unseemly for one who professes to be a faithful child of God. Let us further say that her behavior involved that of seeing another woman's husband socially "on the sly." Let us also stipulate that others were aware of this action, both within and without the local church. Most right thinking people would conclude that such action was at the very least a violation of "abstaining from appearances (every form, ASV) of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22). What would constitute "repentance" and "confession" in this case?

Some have the mistaken notion that a sinning Christian need only "come forward" and ask for the prayers of the congregation. ***This is not repentance.*** For what is the church to pray? If the one coming forward merely acknowledges "If I have sinned or caused anyone to sin, I want your prayers." ***This is not confession.*** What does this person mean "if" they have sinned? This is not much more than merely taking out some kind of insurance..."just in case." I **am not** suggesting that there is never a time that a sinning brother or sister ought not to "come forward," nor that they ought not to ask for the prayers of the saints. But neither of

these constitute repentance nor confession of sins.

Repentance must take place in the heart and mind of the one who has sinned. It is the change of mind which will result in the change of actions. Confession means "to speak out" the truth of a matter, openly. In its positive usage, it means to thank someone for something specific. If you send me a gift, and I merely say "Thanks" when next I see you, I have not really thanked you properly. Rather, I would say "Thank-you **for the gift you sent to me!**" Therefore, if one comes forward at an assembly and has not changed their mind nor their sinful actions, they have not repented...regardless of what they say. If they come forward and say "If I have...." they have not confessed. Rather, they must decide to stop their sin and not do so again. If the sin was public or generally known, they must confess it. Unless and until this is done, how shall forgiveness by brethren be forthcoming?

Back to the illustration above: repentance by this sister would include her cessation of seeing that man socially "on the sly" and ask the Lord's forgiveness. Since it was generally known, she must confess her fault (James chapter five) that the church may know that she has indeed repented and wants their forgiveness for bringing reproach and gossip against the church. I do not contend that she must give all the details, but the reason for her "coming forward" must be known, else what shall the church ask in her behalf? How would they know that she has stopped her sin of impropriety, rather than say, speeding? If we have sinned, let us **repent** and not merely **report!**

Sermon Notes:
“The Bread of Heaven”

- Some people follow Jesus because of _____.
- Some follow to find _____.
- to work for food is important; but to do the word of _____ leads to eternity.
- The work of God begins with _____.
- Manna in the wilderness...
- 5 loaves and 2 fishes...
- These were only _____; those who ate these died.
- The bread of Heaven is eaten _____ time; the eater gain eternal life.
- To “partake of Jesus” is not cannibalism, but _____!

Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Evening: 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.

Preachers:

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RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST



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February 21, 2010

Weekly Budget: \$1472.00

Weekly Item Needed:

Paper Towels

Wednesday's Wisdom:

*“We should never tire of hearing the word of God. We need to be reminded again and again.”
Jacob Haley*

Please pick up a copy the **men's business meeting** notes.

PLEASE NOTE: we are terribly behind in our giving for our budget. We are going to have to lower thermostats, and make other changes to meet expenses. We would like to schedule a Gospel meeting, but do not have the funds to bring anyone in. Robin and James have taken cuts for their work. Remember, the Lord taught that the “laborer is worthy of his hire.” This applied to the apostles who went out on the limited commission (Luke 10.7), it applies to Gospel preachers (I Corinthians 9.9), and elders who make their living with the church (I Timothy 5.8). Let us remember to give generously and cheerfully for *all* the aspects of the work here.

Sermon Preview:

- Jesus is the bread of Heaven, John chapter 6.
- Some did not understand His teaching about this.
- Some today do not understand it.
- He was NOT teaching about the Lord's supper!