

Repentance is emphasized in the Bible as essential for our forgiveness.

Now in those days **John the Baptist** *came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2“**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**” (Matt 3:2 NASB 1995)

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**” (Matt 3:17 NASB 1995)

in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, **the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias**, in the wilderness. 3And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching **a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;**(Luke 3:2-3 NASB 1995)

and He said to them, “**Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations,** beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46-47 NASB 1995)

People in every country of the world must hear God's message. **They must stop doing wrong things and change how they live. When they do this, God will forgive them for all the bad things that they have done.** People need to tell this message about the Messiah in Jerusalem first, then tell people in other countries. (Luke 24:47 EASY)

Acts 3:19 NKJV. [19] **Repent therefore and be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, (It’s okay to come to Jesus just as you are. You just can’t stay as you are. You must be converted and start working out your salvation with fear and trembling – with God’s help we can do it. **If you need God’s help with an addiction call for prayer & visit the deliverance link on the home page – people get set free every day – it will work for you too)**

God is merciful. When the devil was going all through heaven trying to get other angels to join him in his rebellion, that took quite some time. God was hoping Lucifer would come to his senses and repent of such nonsense . Finally after Lucifer had persuaded one third of the angels to join his foolish rebellion, God had to kick them out.

Similarly with Judas Iscariot. Jesus knew Judas was stealing (JN 12:6) out of the offerings, but gave him 3-1/2 years to stop. Very merciful.

I remember one time a mother at church asked me if I would talk to her son about something. She wouldn't tell me exactly what it was, just asked if I would pick him up for church. I said, I guess so, but would prefer to know what it's about.

So, I picked him up and he told me that he had been having Bible study at his house with his girlfriend alone and they kept falling into sin. He said that each time they would ask for forgiveness, but it had been going on for several months. He asked me, if they were forgiven? I can't remember exactly what I said, but something like no because you are making no effort to stop(repentance) the wrong behavior. He said, that's what his mom said. I said I agree with your mom because Jesus clearly tied repentance to forgiveness in Luke 24:47. I said the devil might give you a counterfeit sense of forgiveness but it's deception. It's more important to "walk the walk", than to "talk the talk".

If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell. (Matt 18:9 NASB 1995 – words of Jesus)

Jude 1:4 AMPC [4] For certain men have **crept in** stealthily [gaining entrance secretly by a side door]. Their doom was predicted long ago, **ungodly** (impious, profane) **persons who pervert the grace (the spiritual blessing and favor) of our God into lawlessness and wantonness and immorality**, and disown and deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).(Be careful not to listen to preachers that pervert grace into a way to continue in immorality – in God's multi-faceted grace (1Pet1:4) there is forgiveness. God's grace also teaches us to reject sin)

Titus 2:11-12 AMP. [11] **For the [remarkable, undeserved] grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. [12] It teaches us to reject ungodliness and worldly (immoral) desires, and to live sensible, upright, and godly lives [with a purpose that reflect spiritual maturity] in this present age,**

I have heard people say God sees us all perfect through the blood of Jesus. I think that is true if we are following God's plan for our lives and living a holy life.

I think it's also important to note that Jesus doesn't say to the seven churches in the book of revelation that they look perfect through His blood. He says 5 of 7 need to correct some problems.

Revelation 2:19-23 NASB1995. [19] 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. [20] But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bondservants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. [21] **I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.** [22] **Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.** [23] And **I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts;** and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

In 1Cor6, Gal5 and Eph5 the Apostle Paul doesn't say the Christians all look perfect through the blood of Jesus but warns that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.

In Christian theology, "will not inherit the kingdom of God" generally refers to the idea that certain individuals, **specifically those who habitually practice unrighteous behaviors and remain unrepentant,** will not experience the blessings and eternal life associated with God's kingdom. **This is not about losing salvation due to a single sin,** but rather about a lifestyle that consistently rejects God's will.

I remember being a word partner with brother Hagin and I would get a cassette tape in the mail once a month. I will always remember one message about his grandmother almost slipping into hell over cigarettes. She had been in a coma for a long time and Brother Hagin was praying about it and the Lord said it was his mercy keeping her in the coma because otherwise she'd be in hell. He was shocked. I think at that time he believed once saved always saved if you were born again regardless of how you lived. So, the Lord told him to go to her bedside and forgive her sin (John 20:23). So, he went to her bedside and said, Lord what sin do I need to forgive? The Lord said the sin of smoking. So, he laid hands on her and forgave the sin of smoking, and within two minutes she was gone to heaven. He asked the Lord for a scripture and the Lord gave him 1Cor9:27. Since she was in a coma, it was impossible for her to confess and repent of her sin at that time. God was merciful.

I've had many people tell me God isn't that strict. At the end of the day, it's up to you what you believe. Job said who can know God (Job 36:26)? I think people are just too familiar with a God that they don't know as well as they think they do. They don't know how he feels about some of these things. I believe the Father sees Jesus on the cross and the way he suffered terribly with emphysema and lung cancer and when you just keep smoking for years

and never repent you are insulting the Spirit of Grace (Hebrews 10:29). God has made provision for sin, but not permission for it. We need to strive to live as holy as possible remembering that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Please do not take God's amazing grace for granted. If we slip up and make a mistake there is forgiveness if we are sincere:

1 John 1:9 NASB1995 [9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Proverbs 24:16 NASB1995. [16] For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity. (When we make mistakes God will help us get back up, dust ourselves off, and keep striving to be more like Jesus)

Also in the Lord's prayer, which is a daily prayer, Jesus instructed us to ask for forgiveness (Jesus was sinless and had no need to be forgiven) but He knew we were going to make honest mistakes as we grow and strive to live righteous lives. It was for us that he included asking God for forgiveness (Matt6:12).

1 Corinthians 9:27 NASB1995 [27] but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (This verse is the Apostle talking about having to practice extreme self-control, also known as crucifying the flesh, to prevent his body from doing wrong things so he doesn't backslide into hell)

I remember Pastor Benny Hinn came to town and did a crusade. He talked about his angel showing him a man pacing back and forth in a cell muttering to himself that he would pay back what he stole. The Angel asked Pastor Benny if he knew what this was, and he said no. The angel said that's a preacher who was stealing out of the offerings now in hell. You could have heard a pin drop in the Maybe center. The preacher didn't understand that **repentance was required for forgiveness.**

If you read Mary Kay Baxter's book "A Divine Revelation of Hell", Jesus takes her to hell, and they visit a lot of different people. There were three different preachers in hell as I remember and two out of the three part of the reason was, they were stealing out of the offerings. Again, they didn't understand that **repentance is required for forgiveness (Luke 24:47).**

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the **elementary principles of Christ**, let us go on to perfection, not laying again **the foundation of repentance** from dead works and of faith toward God, (**repentance is the most elementary principle of Christ**)

I remember one time praying for a woman downtown for God to set her son free of a heroin addiction and God said to me I will not answer the prayer because she is involved in criminal activity and has no intention of repenting. **God reminded me of Psalm 66:18 below:**

If I regard **sin and baseness** in my heart [**that is, if I know it is there and do nothing about it**], **The Lord will not hear [me]**; [Prov 15:29; 28:9; Is 1:15; John 9:31; James 4:3]

2 Chronicles 7:14 AMPC [14] If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek, crave, and require of necessity My face **and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin,** and heal their land.