

I) REPENTANCE AND FAITH

Faith – “A firm and confiding belief in Jesus and His gospel...the means of appropriating what God in Christ has for man, resulting in the transformation of man’s character and way of life.” (1)

“Our lock on the goodness and power of God so that no matter what we face outwardly, inwardly we stand secure. And no matter what the world looks like outwardly, it has the potential to be transformed by our faith.” (2)

Repentance – “Changing of one’s mind, and asking God to change our hearts, that we may sin no more. A conviction in our hearts that sin is contrary to God’s will and our own good, followed by asking God to take away the guilt of our sin and make us righteous people.” (3)

A) BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR FAITH

a. God promises to be faithful in His covenant relationship with believers.

“The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and **faithfulness**,”
(Exodus 34:6)

“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and **faithfulness** go before you.”
(Psalm 89:14)

“For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his **faithfulness** to all generations.”
(Psalm 100:5)

“For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will **faithfully** give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.”
(Isaiah 61:8)

“22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
23 they are new every morning;
great is your **faithfulness**.

24 ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”
(Lamentations 3:22-24)

b. God promises to bless our lives abundantly as we obey Him in faith.

"1 And if you **faithfully** obey the voice of the LORD your God... all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God.

7 The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you...

9 The LORD will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways...

11 And the LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give you...

13 And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail."

(See Deut. 28)

c. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the Spirit of adoption as sons and daughters of the Father.

"12 But to all who did receive him, who **believed in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13)

"14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "**Abba! Father!**" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him." (Romans 8:14-17)

d. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we live under grace and our sins are forgiven.

“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, for by **grace** you have been saved through **faith**... And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,”
(Eph. 1:7, 2:8)

“21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of **faith**, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is **faithful**.”
(Heb. 10:21-23)

e. Christ dwells in our hearts through faith.

“so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through **faith**--that you, being rooted and grounded in love,”
(Ephesians 3:17)

f. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are given power to resist temptation.

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is **faithful**, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”
(1 Cor. 10:13)

g. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are protected from demonic oppression and achieve victory over evil.

“In all circumstances take up the shield of **faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;”
(Eph. 6:16)

“But the Lord is **faithful**. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.”
(2 Thess. 3:3)

“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our **faith**.” (1 John 5:4)

h. God allows our faith to be tested through trials to strengthen our character.

“2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your **faith** produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:2-4)

g. Through faith in Jesus Christ, He lives in us, and we become partakers of His divine nature.

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by **faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

“To those who have obtained a **faith** of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 May **grace** and **peace** be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3 His divine **power** has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the **knowledge** of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with virtue, and virtue with **knowledge**, 6 and knowledge with **self-control**, and self-control with **steadfastness**, and steadfastness with **godliness**, 7 and godliness with **brotherly affection**, and brotherly affection with **love**. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:1-8)

h. God honors the prayer of faith.

“21 And Jesus answered them, ... 22 And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have **faith**.”
(Matt. 21:21-22)

“To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of **faith** by his power,”
(2 Thess. 1:11)

“15 And the prayer of **faith** will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”
(James 5:15-16)

h. Jesus calls us to share our faith, that others may be saved and sanctified.

“I am sending you 18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by **faith** in me.”
(Acts 17b-18)

“31 Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your **faith** may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”
(Luke 21:31-32)

i. Faith brings true unity to God’s Church.

“20 I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”
(John 17:20-21)

“until we all attain to the unity of the **faith** and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,”
(Ephesians 4:13)

“The apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our **faith**!’”
(Luke 17:5)

B) BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR REPENTANCE

a. **“The universal reason we need to repent is that we have all yielded to the rebellious nature we have each inherited from Adam. We are rebels at war with God. We cannot make peace with Him until we lay down our rebellion – that is, until we repent.”** (4)

“Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil.” (Isaiah 1:5b-6)

b. **As we repent in faith, we are welcomed into the Kingdom of God, receive the Holy Spirit, receive forgiveness, and are cleansed of the guilt of our sins.**

"I baptize you with water for **repentance**, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matthew 3:11)

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2)

“38 And Peter said to them, "**Repent** and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the **forgiveness** of your sins, and **you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” (Acts 2:38-39)

“12 As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. 13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows **compassion** to those who fear him. (Psalm 103:12-13)

“9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

c. The repentant heart becomes more open to Godly conviction.

“23 Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!
24 And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.” (2 Cor. 7:9-10)

d. The repentant heart sees the kindness and patience of the Father.

“4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to **repentance?**” (Romans 2:4)

e. When is repentance complete? When good fruit replaces bad fruit!

“8 Bear fruits in keeping with **repentance.**” (Luke 3:8)

“22 But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-25)

C) THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

As we read the parable of the prodigal son together, please ask the Holy Spirit to help you discern the heart condition of the younger son and the older son at the end of the parable. How might you pray with each son?

“11 And he said, there was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

25 Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' 28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29 but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' 31 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

(Luke 15:11-32)

In The Return of the Prodigal Son, Henri Nouwen offers the following perspective on the heart condition of the father's sons.

“The son's ‘leaving,’ is, therefore, a much more offensive act than it seems at first reading. It is a heartless rejection of the home in which the son was born and nurtured and a break with the most precious tradition carefully upheld by the larger community of which he was a part. When Luke writes, ‘and left for a distant country,’ he indicates much more than the desire of a young man to see more of the world. He speaks about a drastic cutting loose from the way of living, thinking, and acting that has been handed down to him for generation to generation as a sacred legacy. More than disrespect, it is a betrayal of the treasured values of family and community. The ‘distant country’ is the world in which everything considered holy at home is disregarded.” (5)

“The lostness of the elder son, however, is much harder to identify. After all, he did all the right things. He was obedient, dutiful, law-abiding, and hardworking. People respected him, admired him, praised him, and likely considered him a model son. Outwardly, the older son was faultless. But when confronted by his father's joy at the return of his younger brother, a dark power erupts in him and boils to the surface. Suddenly there becomes glaringly visible a resentful, proud, unkind, selfish person, one that had remained deeply hidden, even though it had been growing stronger and more powerful over the years.” (6)

D) QUESTIONS:

“What does repentance mean to you?

What takes place in your heart when you truly repent?

Why is the heart involved to renew the mind? How does this work?

How is obedience possible only for those who have a surrendered heart?

How does someone surrender to God's grace?

How does faith enable repentance? Is God asking you to repent of some sin or disobedience? How does your faith need to grow in order to truly repent?” (7)

D) PRAYER PROCESS FOR REPENTANCE

a. Accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or re-affirm Your faith:

“Lord Jesus Christ, I believe You are the Son of God and the only way to God – that You died on the cross for my sins and rose again so that I might be forgiven and receive eternal life.” (8)

b. Repent of All Habitual Patterns of Sinful Behavior:

“Father, I am sorry for....

“Please forgive me for...

“I repent of...

“Thank you!

- (1) The Complete Word Study Dictionary, edited by Spiros Zodhiates. Page 1163
- (2) This Day We Fight (Breaking the Bondage of a Passive Spirit), by Francis Frangipane. Page 112
- (3) The Complete Word Study Dictionary. Page 134
- (4) They Shall Expel Demons, by Derek Prince. Page 71
- (5) The Return of the Prodigal Son, by Henri Nouwen. Page 36
- (6) Ibid. Page 71
- (7) When Heaven Invades Earth; A 40-Day Personal Journal. Page 19
- (8) Unbound, by Neal Lozano. Page 65-66

JESUS IS LORD

“Beloved, you resist the enemy not by fighting his mind forays but by submitting to the mind of Christ within. Learn to turn and yield your thoughts to Mine. Practice will enable you to take thoughts captive.

The place of deliverance is within you. It is the safe and holy place of the inner man of your spirit, where My life rules and reigns supreme. In this delightful discipline, I will create a fortress in your mind as you cooperate with Me.

There is an equalizing pressure within that not only disregards enemy attacks on the mind but also delivers a positive truth and perspective to counter enemy assaults on your life and others around you.

In this next season, the battle for your mind and thought life will intensify because this is the time of your appointed breakthrough.

I am going to enable you to enjoy peace of mind. As you give away your worries, anxieties and fears, you will experience an eternal victory that is being shaped and influenced by holy thinking.” (1)

(1) The Secret of a Powerful Inner Life, by Graham Cooke. Page 68

