

Godly Sorrow and Repentance

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Brethren, in today's world and society, the movement away from the laws and precepts of our Heavenly Father has become faster and faster and more and more noticeable and significant over the past years. We truly have entered an age where, as Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 5:20, people call good evil and evil good and call darkness light and light darkness. The world truly is upside down and in rebellion against God the Father.

The very laws that God the Father has put in place to advance the happiness of mankind have been rejected and are now thought as judgmental, unloving, unjust, and, by extension, evil.

The world has originated its own definition of terms and concepts such as what God is, what love is, what a family is, what justice is, what happiness is, what unhappiness is, and what sorrow is.

Please turn with me to 2 Corinthians 7, and we will read where the Apostle Paul discusses an important concept concerning sorrow.

2 Corinthians 7:9 *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.*

10) For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 7:1 *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. (NIV)*

So brethren, what Paul is emphasizing in verse 10 is that there are two types of sorrow: one leading to spiritual life and salvation and one leading to spiritual death. The stakes are extremely high in differentiating these two sorrows because our spiritual salvation depends on which sorrow we choose.

Brethren, in my sermon this afternoon entitled Godly Sorrow and Repentance, I would like to explore the important subjects of Godly sorrow and of repentance, what they are, what they are not, and steps that we can take to achieve true repentance. Brethren, without Godly sorrow, there is no true repentance, and without true repentance, there is no salvation and there is no entry into our Heavenly Father's Kingdom. I would like to explore this subject today using four points.

The first point concerning Godly sorrow and repentance is:

1. Godly sorrow leads to salvation

Let's read **2 Corinthians 7:10** again:

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Let's again let the Bible define the terms that we are going to use. The Greek phrase *Godly sorrow* is "ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη" (heh kata theon lúpeh). The Greek word *kata* followed by a noun in the accusative case means "according to". The names of the four gospels in Greek are *Kata Matthaion – Kata Markon – Kata Loukan – Kata Ioannayn*. In each of these titles, the word *kata* means "according to." So the names of the four Gospels in Greek are: *According to Matthew – According to Mark – According to Luke – According to John*.

So 2 Corinthians 7:10 could be translated as *For sorrow according to God produces repentance to salvation*.

Please turn with me to James 4. The Apostle James wrote about the sorrow that God the Father wants us to have when we sin and fall short of His glory.

James 4:8 *Draw nigh to God [ὁ θεός – ho theos – God the Father], and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

9) *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.*

10) *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

The Greek verbs for *be afflicted*, *mourn*, and *weep* are "ταλαιπωρέω, πενθέω, and κλαίω" (talaiporéo, penthéō and klaío) Strong's #5003, #3996, and #2799. All three verbs deal with inner strife, with mourning and lamenting, and with feeling guilt. This inner strife and mourning coupled with humility is the sorrow according to the will of God the Father. It is Godly sorrow.

Please turn with me to Philippians 2. How can we have this Godly sorrow, the sorrow according to our Heavenly Father? The Apostle Paul explains how in his epistle to the Philippian brethren.

Philippians 2:5 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

6) *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

7) *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

8) *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Whose mind was in Christ? It was God the Father's mind that was in Jesus Christ. And we are to let God the Father's mind, His attitudes, His character, His compassion, and His love be in us and in our minds. With His mind in us, we will sorrow in the way that God the Father desires in accordance with His will.

Please turn with me to Psalm 51. Brethren, Romans 3:23 states *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* So we all have sinned, and we continue to sin, and we will continue to sin. Our actions after sinning is the difference. David wrote about this in Psalm 51 as he sorrowed concerning his sins concerning Bathsheba and Uriah.

Psalm 51:16 *For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.*

17) The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

So, the sorrow that God the Father wants us to have comes from a broken spirit and a contrite heart and mind.

Speaking of David, please turn with me to 1 Samuel 13. David had many faults, but God the Father saw something special in David that attracted Him to David. After Yehovah, whom we know is God the Father, had rejected Saul as being king over Israel because of Saul's disobedience, Yehovah chose a new future king who would succeed Saul at Saul's death.

1 Samuel 13:14 *But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.*

Please turn with me to Acts 13. During Paul's sermon in Antioch, He tells the story of Yehovah choosing David as king.

Acts 13:21 *And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.*

22) And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

The Greek words for *after mine own heart* in verse 22 are "κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν μου" which literally means "according to my heart." This Greek word *kata* with the accusative case means "according to" and is the same word *kata* which is used in 2 Corinthians 7:10 concerning "sorrow according to God". So Acts 3:22 is saying that David was a man according to God the Father's heart. But what happened when a man according to our Heavenly Father's heart messed up badly?

Please turn with me to 2 Samuel 12. King David had strayed badly from following the Father's way by committing adultery with Bathsheba. Nathan the Prophet confronted David concerning his grievous sins of the adultery and for having Bathsheba's husband killed in battle to cover up the fact that Bathsheba was pregnant with David's child. David was a man after the Father's own heart, but he still messed badly. But David always was straightforward. When Nathan confronted him, David immediately was stricken with sorrow that led him back to the Father. And God the Father forgave him.

2 Samuel 12:13 *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.*

Brethren, when confronted concerning his grievous sins, David did not make excuses. He did not try to justify himself. After hearing from Nathan all the punishment that David would have to endure the rest of his life because of those sins, his only reply and his immediate reply was "I have sinned against Yehovah."

We have just read verse 16 of Psalm 51. The entirety of Psalm 51 is an example of Godly sorrow, coming from the depths of the mind and heart of a man who sorrowfully wanted to return back to the obedience to Yehovah and His laws.

The second point concerning Godly sorrow and repentance is:

2. The sorrow of the world leads to death

Let's reread **2 Corinthians 7:10** again:

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Brethren, there are many reasons why we can be sorrowful. Our nation's prisons are full of sorrowful people. But most of the inmates are sorrowful for a wrong reason: they are sorrowful that they got caught and that they are being imprisoned for their crimes. And many times, when inmates are released from prison, they go right back to a life of crime which leads them right back to prison. Their sorrow does not lead to change.

One of the most well-known examples of worldly sorrow is the example of Judas. Please turn with me to John 13. Judas was one of the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus during His ministry. But Judas had significant character flaws. He was the disciple who held the moneybag for the ministry of Jesus. Apparently, he was very attracted to money.

Please turn with me to Mark 14. Judas went to the chief priests to plan how he would betray Jesus. And Judas betrayed Jesus for the price of 30 pieces of silver.

Mark 14:10 *And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.*

11) And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

Please turn with me to Matthew 27. When Judas saw that Jesus was going to end up being condemned to death, he was extremely sad and overwhelmed with guilt.

Matthew 27:3 *Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,*

4) *Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.*

5) *And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.*

The Greek verb for *repented himself* in verse 3 is “μεταμέλομαι” (metamélomai) Strong’s #3338 which means “to regret, to feel remorse.”

Judas felt horrible and regretted his decision to betray Jesus, because he now saw what the end result of his betrayal would be: the death of His Master. But there was no searching for forgiveness. There was just an overwhelming emotional response to a terrible decision that he had made that was spiraling out of control. His way of remorse was to kill himself by hanging himself.

Although worldly sorrow leads to spiritual death, many times it actually leads to physical death also.

Another example of worldly sorrow is the example of Cain. Please turn with me to Genesis 4, and we will read about the slaying of Abel by his brother Cain and the aftermath when God the Father approached Cain concerning his grievous sin.

Genesis 4:8 *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

9) *And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?*

10) *And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

11) *And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.*

12) *When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.*

13) *And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.*

14) *Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

Yehovah warned Cain of the probable sin that he would commit if he didn't alter his mindset. Cain didn't heed the warning and soon killed Abel. When confronted by God the Father, there was no Godly sorrow, just remorse and regret that he was now going to be punished. The focus of his sorrow was only on himself.

Please turn with me to Matthew 25. At the end of many of Jesus' parables, the wicked are cast into the fire or are cast into outer darkness. Their sorrow is not Godly sorrow but the sorrow of the world. One recurring action on the wicked people's part upon learning of their sentence of eternal death found in many of His parables is also found in Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:30 *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

This action on the part of the wicked is first sadness (weeping and crying) which then turns to anger, wrath and resentment toward God the Father and Jesus Christ (gnashing of teeth). There is no desire for repentance and change and reconciliation with God the Father.

Brethren, the sorrow of the world leads to spiritual death and to an alienation from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The third point concerning Godly sorrow and repentance is:

3. Repentance means to change

Let's reread **2 Corinthians 7:10** again:

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

The Greek word for *repentance* is “μετάνοια” (metánoia) *Strong's* #3341 which means “a change of mind, a change of the inner man”. Therefore, repentance is not feeling bad for what we've done. Repentance is not feeling contrite about the sins we've committed. That is the Godly sorrow which leads us to this point of change. Repentance is the change. We must change. We must change our thinking, we must change our attitudes, we must change our speech, we must change our lifestyles, and we must change our behavior and our actions.

Please turn with me to Matthew 3. John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing people in preparation of the ministry of Jesus.

Matthew 3:1 *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,*

2) *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

3) *For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

5) *Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,*

6) *And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.*

7) *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*

8) *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:*

John the Baptist was not telling the people to be sorrowful because the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. No, he was telling the people to change. He was not telling the Pharisees and Sadducees to bring forth fruits and actions suitable for feeling sorry for

what they've done. No, he was telling them to bring forth fruits and actions suitable for changing the way they lived and turning around their lives.

Please turn with me to Luke 5. The scribes and the Pharisees were always trying to find ways to attack Jesus and His teachings and His actions.

Luke 5:30 *But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?*

31) *And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.*

32) *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Again, Jesus came to call sinners to change the way that they live. He called them to change course, to change direction, to change their inner thoughts, their inner minds, and their inner being.

The Greek word *metánoia* is used throughout the New Testament. Please turn with me to 2 Peter 3. The Apostle Peter used this noun in instructing the saints in his second epistle.

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord [Κύριος without the definite article *the* – God the Father] is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

So, God the Father desires that all humanity should come to change the way they think, act, and speak to be in accordance with His laws and His way of life. This is whole goal and purpose of His plan of salvation.

Please turn with me to Matthew 18. Another Greek word similar to *metanoia* is *στρέφω* (*stréfo*) Strong's #4762 and is found in verse 3 of Matthew 18. Jesus was making a point to the multitudes that we must become childlike in our humility and our attitudes toward God the Father.

Matthew 18:3 *And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

The verb *be converted* here in verse 3 is “*stréfo*” which means “to turn, to change direction, to change course, to go the opposite way.”

So, repentance is changing course, going a different way than we've been going, and turning away from the sins of the past.

The important concept here is that Godly sorrow brings us to the point of changing our lives, to going a different way, and to turn away from the sins of our lives. Repentance, in and of itself, is not Godly sorrow. It is the result of Godly sorrow in our lives when we indeed do change our lives.

The fourth point concerning Godly sorrow and repentance is:

4. There are five steps toward repentance

Each of these steps are cumulative and depend on the previous steps. The first step in the process of repentance is:

a. Step 1 – Acknowledgement - We must acknowledge our sins

The Apostle Paul wrote an important fact in Romans 3:23 that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; So we have all sinned and Paul wrote in Romans 6:23 that the wages of sin is death. So, sin is not something that we should consider capriciously or callously.

There are many scriptures instructing us to acknowledge our sins. It is the first step in changing our mindset. If we are not willing to acknowledge our sins when we become knowledgeable of them, then the repentance process stops dead in its tracks and does not proceed any further.

Please turn with me to Jeremiah 3. God the Father instructs us to acknowledge our sins to Him.

Jeremiah 3:13 *Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.*

Please turn with me to Hosea 5. Again, God the Father told Hosea that He was desiring His people to acknowledge their sins and offenses against Him.

Hosea 5:15 *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.*

Please turn with me to Psalm 51. King David wrote with Godly sorrow that he acknowledged his sins that he committed concerning Bathsheba and Uriah.

Psalm 51:3 *For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.*

Please turn with me to 1 John 1. The Apostle John wrote an instruction that has been misread and misused over the past centuries by most churches.

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

The Greek verb *to confess* in verse 9 is “ὁμολογέω” (homologéō) Strong’s #3670 which can mean “to confess, to declare, to admit”. So John is instructing us to admit our sins, not so much as in confessing them openly to others or to a priest, but in admitting and acknowledging them to God the Father.

Please turn with me to Proverbs 28, where we read about this admission of sins in the Old Testament.

Proverbs 28:13 *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

The Hebrew verb *to confess* in verse 13 is “**יָדָה**” (yadah) Strong’s #3034 which appears in the Hiphil form in verse 13. This verb *yadáh* in the Hiphil form means “to confess in the sense of acknowledging”. So, the proverb is telling us that he who acknowledges his sin and turns from them shall receive mercy. That is the process of repentance.

So the first step in the process of repentance is acknowledgement – we must acknowledge our sins to God the Father.

The second step in the process of repentance is:

b. Step 2 – Desire – We must desire to change

Please turn with me again to Psalm 51. David again yearned to change and to have a correct attitude and mindset within him after committing his grievous sin.

Psalm 51:9 *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Please turn with me to Romans 7. The Apostle Paul discusses the continuing battle in our minds and hearts concerning repentance, sin and the desire to change.

Romans 7:14 *So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin.*

15) I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.

16) But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good.

17) "So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

18) And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't.

19) I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

20) But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

21) I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong.

22) I love God's law with all my heart.

23) But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.

24) Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?

25) *Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin. (NLT)*

Brethren, maybe we have been struggling with certain sins all of our lives. We all sin. We, like Paul, do the things we hate, and we don't do the things we should do. We will continue to sin until we die our physical lives. The key is what is our attitude toward sin and sinning? The acknowledgement of our sin and the desire not to continue the sin is paramount. We must have the desire to change and to stop sinning the sin that besets us. Have we learned yet to hate sin? Do we truly desire to change or do we truly desire to continue to sin?

Brethren, we all are weak. And by ourselves, we are defenseless against sin, against the wiles of Satan and his demons, and against our own human nature.

Please turn with me to 2 Corinthians 12. The Apostle Paul gives us hope, because we are not in this spiritual battle alone. We have help, immense help which will help us to be strong against sin.

2 Corinthians 12:10 *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Brethren, when we are weak, we are strong. If we truly desire to change, if we truly desire to change to quit sinning the sins which beset us, and if we truly desire to turn away from sin and toward our Heavenly Father, then He will help us with immense help, which brings us to the third step.

The third step in the process of repentance is:

c. Step 3 – Power – We must use the power of the Holy Spirit

So, brethren, if we truly desire to change from our evil ways and to continually seek our Heavenly Father and His ways instead, God the Father will give us the power to change through His Holy Spirit.

Please turn with me to 2 Timothy 1. The Apostle Paul tells us about this powerful Spirit that God the Father has given us.

2 Timothy 1:7 *For God [ὁ θεός – ho theos – God the Father] hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

God the Father has given us as His children the power to overcome sin, if we acknowledge the sin, and if we truly desire to overcome the sin. There is no greater power in the universe and beyond that is greater than that power. And our Heavenly Father is providing that power to us if we ask for it and we truly desire to change our lives.

Please turn with me to Philippians 4. Furthermore, Paul writes that we can do anything, accomplish anything, in accordance with the Father's will through His power and through Christ with the power that they will give us.

Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12) I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Again, brethren, all things means all things. All things means overcoming any sin that besets us, no matter what that sin is. Again, nothing is too great and nothing is too hard for our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Please turn with me to Romans 1. Paul writes that the power of God brings us toward salvation.

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

Please turn with me to Ephesians 6. The Apostle Paul is exhorting the Ephesian congregation to be strong and stand firm and armored in our spiritual battle against sin and against Satan and his demons.

Ephesians 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord [Κύριος – kurios without the definite article "the" – God the Father], and in the power of his might.*

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to be strong in the power of God the Father's might.

So, brethren, if we acknowledge our sins, if we desire to change our ways and to stop sinning, God the Father will give us the power to overcome our sins, which leads us to the next step.

The fourth step in the process of repentance is:

d. Step 4 – Determination – We must be determined to change

There is an old saying: "Insanity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result."

Brethren, we must be determined to change. This means changing the way we do things, changing our environment, changing our habits. As an example, if we are trying to overcome a drinking problem, and we habitually go to bars or parties at night and overdrink, then we must stop going to bars and parties and putting ourselves in a position to be tempted to start drinking which then leads to overdrinking.

We have to change our environment in order not to continually put ourselves in a position where we will continue to fail. It's like trying to lose weight but continuing to eat at pizza parlors and trying to only eat salads there when there is ooey gooey delicious pizza all around us. It just doesn't work. The temptation is too great.

We need to be determined to avoid temptation, to avoid environments which will bring about temptation, to avoid actions and thoughts which lead to temptation. Again, insanity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. It just does not work.

Brethren, we acknowledge our sin, we desire to change and to stop sinning the sin, we have the power from our Heavenly Father to help us stop sinning the sin. We now must have the determination to stop repeating the sin. That determination will help us change the environment, change the habit, change the old ways and adopt new ways and new habits which avoid the pitfalls and the temptations that we've previously experienced time and time again. Instead of eating at pizza parlors, we choose to eat at salad buffets.

Please turn with me to Ephesians 4. Paul exhorts us to do just that in his epistle to the Ephesian brethren.

Ephesians 4:22 *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

23) *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

24) *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

25) *“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: 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 labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

29) *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

30) *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

31) *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:*

32) *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

Brethren, this step is the determination of putting on the new man and getting rid of the old sinful man.

Please turn with me to 1 Corinthians 10. God the Father will help us to do this by giving us a way out. I like how the New Living Translation writes this verse.

1 Corinthians 10:13 *The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)*

The Greek word for *temptations* in verse 13 is “πειρασμός” (peirasmós) Strong’s #3986 which means “testing, trial, temptation, or affliction.” So God the Father does not tempt us; rather He tests us. Conversely, Satan is the one who tempts us.

God the Father tests our determination to change our minds and our attitudes and desires. He tests our determination to live by His laws, His precepts and His love. He gives us a way out, but we must choose that way out. Our determination to stop sinning leads us to the final step.

e. Step 5 – Success – We overcome our sins

Brethren, this step is the victory over a sin, because we have acknowledged it, we desired to change from it, we used the Father’s Holy Spirit to change from it, we became determined to change from it by changing our habits and environment. With those steps, we now have victory and we have changed course. We have repented.

Please turn with me to 1 John 2. The Apostle John exhorted the brethren and encouraged them because they had overcome their trials and tests.

1 John 2:12 *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.*

13) *I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.*

14) *I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*

Please turn with me to 1 John 4. The Apostle John was addressing the war against the spirits of this world.

1 John 4:14 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Please turn with me to 1 John 5, where John discusses the victory of overcoming the world.

1 John 5:3 *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

4) *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

Please turn with me to Revelation 2. To each of the seven churches and the saints therein, Jesus revealed the wonderful future for those who will overcome their sins.

Revelation 2:7 *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

Revelation 2:11 *He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

Revelation 2:17 *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

Revelation 2:26 *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:*

Revelation 3:5 *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

Revelation 3:12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

Revelation 3:21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

Please turn with me to Revelation 21, where we are shown what our eternal destiny will be if we overcome our sins, our tests, and our trials of this life.

Revelation 21:7 *He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

Brethren, the victory is ours if we repent. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:9 that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God the Father has prepared for them who love Him. And He will give us all that and eternal life if we submit to Him, turn from our sins, and love and obey Him.

Brethren, today we have explored the subject of Godly sorrow and repentance through 4 points, which are:

- 1) Godly sorrow leads to salvation
- 2) The sorrow of the world leads to death
- 3) Repentance means to change
- 4) There are five steps toward repentance

- a. Step 1 – Acknowledgement - We must acknowledge our sins
- b. Step 2 – Desire – We must desire to change
- c. Step 3 – Power – We must use the power of the Holy Spirit
- d. Step 4 – Determination – We must be determined to change
- e. Step 5 – Success – We overcome our sins

Brethren, repentance has been misunderstood by many in the past. Repentance is not feeling sorry. Repentance is not the grief and sadness from sin. There is a difference between sorrow and repentance. Repentance is the actual change in our behavior to where we do not sin the sins we've committed before.

The correct sorrow, the Godly sorrow, the sorrow according to God the Father, leads to this repentance and to salvation. The wrong sorrow, the sorrow of the world, leads to spiritual death because that type of sorrow does not lead to repentance but to a continuation of rebellion against God the Father and Jesus Christ and their laws and precepts and way of life.

Brethren, are we overcoming? Do we have Godly sorrow in our hearts and minds? Do we have the desire and the determination to acknowledge our sins and to use God the Father's power to overcome them? Brethren, our very spiritual lives, our spiritual future, and our eternal lives depend on the answer to that question.

I end this message with a question that only you can answer: Are you committed to changing your life, no matter the cost, no matter the obstacles, no matter the circumstances that you are in, to repent of your sins, to change your life, and to reflect more and more with each passing day the character, the love, and the perfection of our Heavenly Father and of our elder brother, Jesus Christ?