

The Relationship Between Repentance and the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is intimately connected with repentance (Acts 11:15-18; Acts 2:38)

Humility, submission, and walking righteously in repentance are being “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Eph 5:15-21)
Rom 15:8-16 – joyful gratitude of the Gentiles for God’s mercy toward them in Christ’s forgiveness of their sins.
Holy Spirit brings joy through believing (repentance and faith), which leads to hope. This evidence of the Spirit is in “goodness” (v14) and “obedience” (v18).

PSALM 51

What is Repentance NOT?

NOT penance (V16-17)

NOT work – “I’m so sorry God. Now I’ll do x,y,z with all my heart to make up for it.”

Penance is still self-centered and self-powered, relying upon my performance/strength (Heb 12:17)

NOT hopeless! Penance is hopeless because it still bases one’s acceptance upon performance.
Repentance hopes because in its complete disintegration of will and its openness to righteousness the Spirit fills it up with promises of forgiveness and the imputed righteousness of Christ through His gracious blood poured out for us.

NOT merely *feeling bad or self-reflection* (v1-4)

Sometimes we feel the weight of sin *and how it makes us feel*

This is not repentance, but still self-centeredness and self-pity

Really there is a hidden criticism of God in this: “How could You make me feel this way? How could you give me a nature like this?” A person living this way sees God as owing him a debt. If there is any forgiving to do, he must forgive God for making him this way and for treating him so badly. This person has thrown his eternal soul away.

2 Cor. 7:8-10 – There is an admission and sorrow that does not lead to salvation, but to death

To admit but not turn and come undone is still relying upon *my* righteousness, either I can make it up, or God isn’t *that* holy that I need to come undone

Admitting sin but not hating it and turning from it is really not admitting it *as sin*, but rather as a “lesser good”. Conviction without coming *completely* undone, so undone that you aren’t depending upon your own righteousness, just leads you to see how you haven’t been righteous enough (Judas’ remorse), even feeling “unforgiveable” is still basing your righteousness upon you, not upon God

Self-reflection is not the same as repentance. This partial-guilt, or half-sinful, attitude is penance. To be repentant is to come *completely undone* and see one as *completely lost* (see Isaiah in Isaiah 6) and to cry out for *mercy* not “another chance.” The beauty of the gospel is the Jesus gives complete mercy!!

NOT perfection

The internal struggle is greater for the Christian, because she has the Spirit of God wrestling AGAINST the Flesh (Gal 5:17ff; Romans 7-8). It is the Spirit of God that gives life (John 6:63)

Repentance is not doing everything perfectly (again, this concept of repentance is still trusting ourselves, not coming undone of our own power)

Repentance is, however, desiring to obey and striving *against* sin, rather than embracing it. Repentance is continual because we continually fall down in sin. Repentance is *continually* turning from sin within us and done by us, *continually* humbling ourselves in desperate need of salvation and *continually* trusting Him as our glorious merciful Savior.

NOT shallow (all the language for sin that David uses: transgression, iniquity, sin, [bloodguiltiness, lit. "bloods"])

"brought forth in iniquity" – my sin goes deep down, not merely bad thinking, but evil desires

Romans 6:1-11 – foundational: died to sin, saved *from* sin, not saved *to* sin, life in God is righteousness

"broken spirit" and "contrite heart" "broken bones"

See Psalm 32:4, "my life shriveled up like a juicy fruit in the summer heat"

What is Repentance?

Losing our power – coming undone

Brokenness underlies faith, a *complete* distrust of our own wisdom and righteousness and *completely* under the righteous authority of the Lord and His merciful and *complete* sacrifice.

Isaiah 6:5 – coming undone, ruined, torn apart

Rom 8:26-27 – the Spirit intercedes when our prayers are cries of weakness, brokenness

Rom 7 – deep distrust of even our own desires. We do not trust our own hearts, but we submit them to the Word of the Lord and His revelation of our true condition (Rom 7:24)

Luke 18:10-14 – "Be merciful to me, *the* sinner!"

Owning our sin

Seeing sin in the full light of God's holiness

Ps 51 – all the words for sin used by David

2 Samuel 12:9 – sin is *despising* God's Word, evil, (see David's response!)

1 Samuel 15:23 – rebellion is as divination and passive resistance to God's Word is the evil of idolatry

No blame-shifting – "I'm sorry that you feel bad."

Saul's response of being shown his sin was to blame the people, make excuses on why his sin was better than God's command, and ultimately to deny that he had sinned (1 Sam 15)

David claimed responsibility for *his* sin, not Bathsheba, Uriah, the people, or God

Taking responsibility for the sin, not merely its consequences

Not overly-concerned with what people see (Ananias/Sapphira, King Saul)

David worshipped *after* the consequences came to pass, not penance (see contrast to Saul)

A & S wanted to be seen as being near to God when they weren't, same with Saul (Acts 5:1-13, 1 Sam 15)

Seeing clearly and honestly

Self-deception melts away into broken-hearted joy of redemption (Ps 51:10-15; Ps 32; Is 61:1-10)

When we see the reality and depth of the sin within us the full glory of God's mercy is revealed

Knowing the depth of our rebellion, the greatness of our sin, the fullness of our depravity and the wickedness of our hearts, THEN the salvation of the LORD is overwhelmingly good news!!

Godly grief over the depth of our sin leads to the immense celebration of joyful praise in repentance and the glory of the Gospel of Jesus! To keep people from godly grief over their sin is to rob them of their joy in the LORD and to steal His praise from their lips!

We need each other to show us our "blind spots" of unbelief and our lack of *functional* faith. We need each other to admonish us when we are "out of line" with the Gospel of grace and are sinning (1 Thes 2:12; 5:14; Eph 4:17ff; Titus 2:11-15)

C.J. Mahaney's example of the man with cream cheese in his moustache.

Turning toward God and others

Prodigal Son – Luke 15:10-32

Arrogance and sin led to destruction and ruin
Destruction and ruin opened his eyes to his sin
Repentance returns him home to seek mercy

David – 2 Samuel 12:1-23, see Ps 51, 32

Nathan reveals to David the heinousness of his sin
David responds with, "I have sinned against the LORD!"

James 5:6 – confess your sins to one another that you may be healed!

Turning away from sin

To turn toward God you must turn away from idols (1 John 5:21; 1 Thes 1:9-10)

Not a perfection, but rather a consistent turning back to the Lord in brokenness and powerlessness (James 4:7-10; 1 Pet 5:5-6; Titus 2:11-15), a disposition and direction of life ("walking" "setting your mind" in Rom 8, continual persistence of pursuit, desire, and direction), not a "one night stand" of sin

Passion for purity (1 John 2; John 14:15; 15:10; Isa 26:8; Ps 37:4; 145:19)

Fighting against sin (Heb 12:4; Gal 5:17ff; Rom 6; 8:5-17)

Repentance places one under the Lordship of Jesus

As children of God, sin is our enemy, we do not embrace it

You cannot have peace with God and make peace with sin (Rom 8:5-11; Gal 5:17)

Enemies of God have peace with sin and children of God have war with sin (Rom 8:3-4)

Psalm 32

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!

² How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!

³ When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long.

⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away *as* with the fever heat of summer. Selah.

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I ^bdid not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

⁶ Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.

⁷ You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

⁹ Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, *Otherwise* they will not come near to you.

¹⁰ Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the LORD, lovingkindness shall surround him.

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.