

KEYS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH (Lesson #6 - REPENTANCE)

1. Repentance begins with a change of THINKING.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

James 4: 8-10

2. Repentance is accompanied by a TURNING.

Let the wicked forsake His way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him... Isaiah 55: 7
...repent of your sins & turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord... Acts 3: 19-20
You turned to God from idols to serve a true & living God. 1 Thessalonians 1:9

3. Repentance results in TRANSFORMATION.

Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.

Matthew 3: 8

*Authentic repentance begins with a change of MIND about sin, which leads to a change in DIRECTION towards God, which leads to a change of BEHAVIOR in my life.

For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold the earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you; what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.

2 Corinthians 7: 10-11

1. GODLY SORROW: Being sorry for the sin, not merely it's CONSEQUENCES.

I confess my sins; I am deeply sorry for what I have done. Psalm 38: 18

Test Question: Do I mourn my sin, or merely the fact I got caught?

2. EARNESTNESS: Being more concerned with being RIGHT WITH GOD than protecting my image before others.

Finally I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone!

Psalm 32: 5

Test Question: Which is more important - being right with God or looking good to others?

3. VINDICATION: Intense desire to clear my NAME by confessing & forsaking sin.

He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion. Proverbs 28: 13

Test Question: What would I do if I knew I would never be found out?

4. INDIGNATION: Anger over the shame my sin has brought God's name which motivates me to RESTORE what is possible.

...if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much. Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today." Luke 19:8b-9

Test Question: Have I restored what is restorable?

5. FEAR: Accepting God's discipline for my sin as a reminder that the PAIN of sin outweighs the PLEASURE of sin.

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness & peace... Hebrews 12: 11

Test Question: Do I resist or submit to God's discipline?

6. LONGING: An intense desire to return to Christ as my FIRST LOVE.

But I have this against you. You have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen and repent... Revelation 2: 4-5a

Test Question: Do I see how close I can get to sin, or how close I can get to God?

7. ZEAL: Bearing the scars of my sin, not as a mark of disqualification, but as a TESTIMONY of God's forgiveness & healing.

Restore to me again the joy of your salvation, & make me willing to obey you. Then I will teach your ways to other sinners, & they - guilty like me - will repent and return to you. Psalm 51: 12-13

Test Question: Am I reaching out in compassion to restore others who have sinned?

8. AVENGING OF WRONG: An intense desire never to tolerate sin, but to KILL sin before it KILLS me or others.

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Col 3: 5

Test Question: Am I aggressively nipping sin in the bud in my thought life?

9. INNOCENT: Gaining a CLEAR CONSCIENCE before God.

...I always try to maintain a clear conscience before God and all people.

Acts 24: 16

Test Question: Is my conscience at peace with God and all people?