



## **Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States**

### **Monthly Message for the Priests Wives**

**November 2024**

#### **Repentance**

#### **Volume 4**

**Here are examples from the Bible, the Synaxarium, and church history of individuals who returned to serve more powerfully, effectively, and influentially after repentance and humbling themselves before God:**

##### **1. King David (Bible):**

- David committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged for her husband Uriah to be killed (2 Samuel 11). After being confronted by the prophet Nathan, David repented sincerely (2 Samuel 12:13) and composed heartfelt psalms of repentance, such as Psalm 51.
- After his repentance, David continued to lead Israel, albeit with consequences for his sin. He remained a central figure in Israel's history, known for his devotion to God (1 Kings 15:5) despite his failures.
- Church Father Quote: "David, the man according to God's own heart, says in the eighty-seventh Psalm, 'My eyes are afflicted by reason of my poverty.'" - St. Ambrose

##### **2. St. Augustine (Church History):**

- Augustine of Hippo lived a life of immorality and intellectual pride before his conversion to Christianity. After his conversion experience, Augustine humbly served as a bishop, theologian, and influential Christian thinker.
- His writings, such as "Confessions" and "City of God," continue to impact Christian theology and philosophy profoundly.

- Church Father Quote: "God had one son on earth without sin, but never one without suffering." - St. Augustine

### **3. St. Mary of Egypt (Synaxarium):**

- St. Mary of Egypt lived a life of sinfulness, engaging in promiscuity and other vices. However, after experiencing a profound conversion while visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, she repented and lived a life of extreme asceticism in the desert for over forty years.
- Despite her previous life of sin, her repentance and asceticism made her a revered figure in Eastern Orthodox Christianity, known for her profound humility and spiritual insight.
- Church Father Quote: "The truly humble man cannot be injured. It is the same to him whether he receives justice or suffers injustice; for he requires nothing, and nothing can lessen his greatness." - St. Isaac the Syrian

### **4. St. Peter (Bible):**

- Peter famously denied Jesus three times during His trial (Matthew 26:69-75). After Jesus' resurrection, Peter repented deeply, and Jesus reinstated him, commissioning him to "feed my lambs" (John 21:15-19).
- Peter went on to become a key leader in the early Christian community, boldly preaching the Gospel and performing miracles, even in the face of persecution.
- Church Father Quote: "The Lord is gentle and merciful, so that He might not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." - St. Cyril of Alexandria

These examples demonstrate how individuals, through repentance and humility, can return to serve more powerfully, effectively, and influentially in the service of God and others.

## **The Relationship with God Removes Blind Spots:**

### **1. Divine Illumination:**

- *Biblical Reference:* Psalm 119:18 (NKJV) - "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law."
- *Comment:* Establishing and nurturing a relationship with God is the key to removing blind spots. Prayerfully seeking divine illumination opens our eyes to the wonders of God's truth in His Word.

## **2. Enlightenment Through Christ:**

- *Biblical Reference:* Ephesians 1:18 (NKJV) - "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what the hope of His calling is, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."
- *Comment:* In Christ, our understanding is enlightened. The relationship with Him unveils the richness of God's promises, providing clarity and dispelling spiritual blindness.

## **3. Transformative Renewal:**

- *Biblical Reference:* Romans 12:2 (NKJV) - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
- *Comment:* A relationship with God brings about transformative renewal. As our minds are renewed, blind spots are eliminated, allowing us to discern and live out God's perfect will.

In conclusion, the bible illuminates the danger of spiritual blind spots in our minds, hearts, and spirits. Establishing and nurturing a relationship with God through Christ is the antidote. Divine enlightenment removes these blind spots, allowing us to walk in the light of God's truth, avoiding the accidents of sin, and deepening our communion with Him.