

Why am I impenitent?

How much are we, as consecrates, in need of a life of repentance, for without it, our service will be weak and fruitless?

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

+ The gospel according to St. Luke chapter thirteen speaks of repentance as the only possible way for salvation from destruction.

In this chapter, Christ stresses the necessity and importance of repentance; without it destruction is inevitable.

*When the Baptist came and firmly stressed: *“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire!” (Matthew 7:19)*, we would have imagined that the kind loving merciful Christ would have lightened and eased the stern words of John, yet He confirmed John’s words and intensity.

+ Therefore, we stand before a fearful unyielding situation; there is no escaping repentance. Regardless of our objections and lack of conviction, our full eternal destiny depends on repentance; our destruction is inevitable (without mercy) if we do not repent.

What is repentance?

There are many definitions for repentance, but only one sums them up: Repentance is abiding in Christ, in His words and teachings, in His way of life, His style, and His steps.

Some see this as the hardest, almost impossible, definition for repentance.

*Some inadequate definitions of Christian repentance, unacceptable by the Lord Jesus, have infiltrated to us from non-Christian cultures, and from those who says *“Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits” (Isaiah 30:10)!*

One who refrains from past sins assumes this counts as repentance; this is repentance in the negative sense.

+ Some feel no need to repent; their social life is wonderful without repentance!

+ If work, popularity, and health are great, what need is there to repent!

*There are mistakes and sins in my life but I enjoy them, and I do not harm anyone with my secret hidden sins! David also assumed he was not harming anyone!

* So, why make a fuss and why change? I’m happy and content this way, and I do not need to repent.

* Eternity and judgment are totally absent from my life, *“He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).*

* The two most troublesome words for those who do not need or want to repent are: eternity and judgment. See Felix the governor's reaction to St. Paul.

* Delaying repentance... I do not refuse to repent, I am simply postponing it to another time. *"Today, if you will hear His voice..." (Hebrews 3:15)*, death comes at any time. Postponing repentance hardens the heart.

Unclear meaning of repentance in my life:

- I see repentance as deprivation from everything I relish and love.
- I see repentance as not only deprivation, but furthermore, it is without compensation.
- I understand repentance as a sad countenance, *"For by a sad countenance the heart is made better" (Ecclesiastes 7:3)*, a frowning sullen face.
- Repentance is trading everything sweet and delightful in my life for nothing and the unknown.
- Ultimately, repentance is uncompensated deprivation, it is a rotten unacceptable change, it is uncomfortable to the people surrounding me, and it is a loss of my friends, my merriment, my celebrations, and my parties.

I am not sure I am going to heaven!

- Many of us do not believe we will go to heaven simply because of discouraging impeding mistaken teachings.
- Because they see repentance as difficult and impossible, therefore, there is no need for it. They do not believe this divine promise *"Having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19)*.
- Not having faith in Christ's forgiveness, or reckoning forgiveness easy and holding it in contempt.
- Losing faith that Christ has forgiven my many repetitive sins, measuring His forgiveness by my standard of forgiving others!
- Treating others' sins in like manner, assuming Christ will treat me the way I treat others.
- We believe we will go to heaven by the blood of the Lord Christ, but, without repentance or holiness we endanger this free promise.

Why do I have to repent?

- First, it is God's commandment: *"Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30)*; Christ Himself commands us, *"Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15)*; and *"Unless we repent, we will all perish" (Cf. Luke 13:3)*.
If we do not repent, like Adam, and transgress against the covenant, we will face the same outcome as Adam.
- Impenitence means certain destruction, *"Unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3)*; perishing here does not mean death by accident or by disease, but eternal death and destruction.
- Repentance is the key to refreshment and mercy: *"Repent... so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19)*.

- Repentance protects my house, my city, and my church, see Abraham and Sodom and Gomorrah... and, as Jeremiah said: *“Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem” (Jeremiah 5:1).*
- Repentance is reconciliation with God at home and within our families; it is the mystery of our children returning to God’s bosom, and ours.
- Repentance restores to me the wedding garment which I misplaced and lost!
- Repentance dresses me in Christ Himself, and makes the Sun of Righteousness burst in my depth.
- It grants me never-before-felt peace of heart: *“‘There is no peace,’” says the Lord “‘for the wicked’” (Isaiah 48:22).*
- A marvelous joy floods the soul and makes it forgo all world joy and delight (Sts. Elaria, Annasimon, Antony...).
- It opens the eye and mind to see life from another new heavenly view.
- The ego disappears, and subsequently so do conflicts in the homes and families.
- Repentance connects me with heaven, the saints, and the angels. Above all, it connects me with eternity through this scarlet cord coming down from God’s throne, the divine ambulance chariot for God’s repentant children.