



# Repentance

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It is a word that is not used very often in our language today. Yet the Bible teaches us to use repentance. But repentance is often poorly used in the Christian environment. Most of the time the vast majority of Christians mistakenly think, that repentance means to ask for forgiveness. Often it is used to humiliate, belittle, or even produce shame.

Most Christians today do not have the correct definition of repentance. Some use it regularly to God to give good conscience when they notice that they have sinned. All these interpretations are most of time the errors of understanding of what repentance is. In this study we will try to understand better, but also see how to integrate our repentance into everyday life.

If you look at the definition of repentance from a literal point of view, it first expresses a regret. And it is often this definition that pushes the wrong understanding, and restricts the magnitude of repentance.

In this same definition, there is also suffering, and it is here that we can touch on the error of interpretation that is often done by Christians today. We think wrongly that the first feeling of repentance is the regret, this is not what happens in repentance at all. We will try to explain in this first example from the bible.

Do you know who the first person was to repent in the bible?

It is God himself.

***Genesis 6:6*** *And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.*

The day when I realized this fact, I said to myself: “But then repentance is not at all what I had been taught when I was a young Christian”. And indeed this is still not what I hear about what is taught in the communities where I went. Because I thought that to repent I should have realized that I had made a mistake. This was my first part of the map that would carry me towards an understanding of true repentance.

How could God have made a mistake?

It is something impossible to consider, because the bible teaches that God is perfect, He knows everything, He is powerful to infinity, He can be in several places at the same time, and everything He does is perfect.

Then it would mean that we might have to repent without necessarily having made a mistake?

Yes. It is exactly that.

Let us pause a moment on this day where God did repent of creating humans.

We are about 1400 years after the creation. Therefore 1400 years after the introduction of sin in the life of humans. 1400 years where the devil was able to root evil in the hearts of humans.

1400 years is a long time, mankind has had the time to develop some habits. And in the cases that interest us, they are very bad habits.

It is important to understand that since the fall of Adam and Eve, the sole purpose of God was to restore human beings to their initial state from before the fall, satan knew it very well. (For more details on this subject see my study on the Character of God).

The things on Earth, at that time had reached an extreme; humans were totally corrupt by evil and totally incapable of doing good, or even having a thought towards good.

***Genesis 6: 5*** *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

We can even see that some fallen angels that the bible talks about, the inhabitants of heaven, who came on Earth to have intimate relations with human women. These women were willing, there had been no obligation or physical violence. They were so corrupted by the evil that they have accepted these relationships with satanic spirits. If you are a woman who reads this study, don't feel pointed at by the finger, because even if the bible does not speak in details of the acts of men at this time, it still said in the verse above that all humans were evil and unable to consider a good thought or act good. I think that men, women and children were all corrupt.

And it is by seeing this sad situation that God is pushed to repent.

Not because he had made a mistake by creating humans, but because this scene has generated some pain in him, a big pain. And how can it be a big pain, a large suffering if one does not love. This pain is generated by the love that God has for his creatures, it is because he loves people more than himself and that was why God was pushed to repentance. Verse 6 tells us that he was afflicted.

What will trigger a repentance in me is always caused by a situation, a circumstance which hurts me. And what I regret is not to have caused or not caused this situation, but it is the overall situation in itself. It is this situation that God was regretting not that he had created humans in the first place. Let us remember that repentance is first a suffering that one experiences in a situation, and that it is only the situation which I regret. In this sense God has not regretted at all to have created human beings.

The fact of regret to have created humans would mean that God would have made a mistake, it is not an interpretation that is consistent with the person of the perfect God. If God had really regretted making humans, he would have done that well before, when Eve and Adam disobeyed, or when Cain killed Abel. But God has not regretted that at all, on the contrary, it is through love that he drove Adam and Eve from the garden so that they do not eat from the tree of life.

Pain and regret of the situation are just the first part of repentance. This first part is common with any form of repentance. That is, for anyone who expresses a true repentance, things should happen this way:

- I am aware of a situation or circumstance
- This situation saddens me and generates a pain in me
- I regret that this situation has come to pass.

We will see a little lower to the other part of repentance, that it may be different depending on the case.

Now, let's look at what followed after what God said and that he repented of creating humans.

Let us remember that God is in a state of sadness, regret of what he sees in his creatures.

**Genesis 6: 7** *And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

The verb here "exterminate" is different depending on the biblical translations. Many versions use:

The New King James Bible says "I will destroy man..."

The God's Word Bible says: "I will wipe off..."

The World English Bible says: 'I will destroy..."

The English Standard Version Bible says: 'I will blow out man..."

The list is not exhaustive, but merely to show that the verb "destroy", and a few other translations, are in my opinion too strong if it is incorporated into our current language. In our dictionary, the definition of "destroy" is: carnage, crushing, killing, slaughter. This does not at all correspond with the thought of **Genesis 6.7**.

To see human beings come with such decline, God didn't have any other choice than to remove or wipe out humans from the surface of the earth, but also animals.

Why?

Let us remember the fact that the sole purpose of God is to restore to man their condition of eternal life, as well as all God's authority on Earth by sending His son.

In one of Andrew Wommack's books he describes very well one of these parameters. He says that the human beings came to such a degree of perversion including physical relationship between men and women, that if God had left humanity this way it would have been impossible to find a virgin girl to be able to give birth to Jesus the son who should be born of a Virgin. And it is important to know that Jesus was born that 2500 years after this day described in Genesis 6.

The bible does not say it, but the animals were surely perverted as well. The bible shows us that the animals may be demon possessed and acting under demonic influence.

**Matthew 8:31-32** So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

At this stage, in **Genesis 6** there should have been a total disorganization both in the human case as well as the animal's case. And God had no other choice than to erase all living beings that were alive to start again with Noah and his family.

We have therefore seen that repentance also generates an action on the part of those who repent, this is the second part of repentance.

A repentance always generates a **pain**, then **regret of the situation**, then an **action** and this action may be different depending on the case as I said above.

In the case that we have just seen, it is God who repents. God is perfect, it is therefore not repented because of an error which he may have done. The action made by God to accomplish his repentance was to wipe humans and the creation off the Earth's surface. There was no other alternative to have the redemption in Jesus so that it could be accomplished.

The bible shows us, that we humans, we must also repent. And if I notice that God repents, it is that repentance is a good thing, that it is not reserved solely for those who have made a mistake.

My goal in this study through Genesis 6, is to well understand repentance, and we humans must practice it in our daily lives.

So now we understand the different steps of repentance, let's turn to the practice.

When John the Baptist began his Ministry, his first words were 'repent'.

**Matthew 3: 2** *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Jesus, when he began his Ministry, says "repent".

**Matthew 4: 17** *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

I will not teach you anything new by saying that repentance is the entry door to the new birth. And now that we know better the steps of repentance, we will analyze this repentance that John and Jesus preached.

The first stage of repentance will be exactly the same as that which God himself has been through in Genesis 6 and in other examples of the bible. Of course, for this I have to understand the good news, the message of the new birth. (For more details on this topic, see my paper on the new birth). The message of the Gospel that I heard for the first time and understood, must generate in me awareness on my spiritual state, and the fact that God loves me as I am.

It is then this awareness, this finding of my situation that will cause pain and suffering. This because I understand that God loves me and that I am cut off from his presence by sin, he did more for me than I could imagine. It is voluntarily that I do not enter into the details of the new birth because this is not our subject today. This suffering will be different for everyone, because we all have our own personality. But the pain and suffering must be there, otherwise this is not repentance.

Some will start to cry in a way stronger than others, some will experience a pain that they will internalize, others will need to get the words out of their mouth, and many other differences are still possible. I say this because it is very important not to make comparison in this case. The only common thing is a pain, a suffering, but it can manifest itself in very different ways for me, my brothers or my sisters in Christ. Often some have been judged too fast, and have been catalogued from a pseudo repentance due to a misunderstanding of this fact cited above.

Then what is wonderful in repentance, it is that this suffering does not last.

It should not last. The pain is there so that I can realize that my situation is not good and that it needs to change.

It is very important to integrate this fact. I have seen Christians who remained in this suffering because of an ignorance of repentance. Nobody had explained to them the different phases of repentance. Remember, repentance is something that God does, it is therefore a good thing. The finality of repentance should never be a suffering, a lowering, humiliation, well on the contrary, repentance is beneficial, it generates a change in our way of thinking.

It is this pain, this suffering that will then generate some regret over the situation that I just discovered. And as in Genesis 6, this regret is not turned toward me as it is often taught, but against my situation which is highlighted before me through the message of the gospel. Too many people have come to God by decreasing themselves. This is not a good thing.

God loves you, what he does not like is the sinner life you had before. Then, when I repent (or already repented) to access the new birth it is important to understand what my position is with Jesus Christ. It is not at all a matter of accusation, humiliation.

No, it's the opposite.

In this case we are as the parable of the prodigal son who returns to his father in:

**Luke 15: 21-22** *And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:*

It's the same way that God reacts when I repented for accessing to the new birth. He gave me everything, according to:

**Romans 8:32** *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

After the regret of my situation, comes straight away the moment where I'll have to act to change my situation, so that it becomes what God has planned for me. This process corresponds to the moment where I say something like: "Thank you Jesus for giving your life for me, that I could have eternal life. I want from now on to follow your teaching every day of my life. »

If you've read my study on the new birth, you have read that Jesus, on the cross, has forgiven all our sins past, present and future. The access to the new birth can be therefore done only once in my life. It is only once that I was born again. It is therefore not necessary to repent a second time, or a third, etc... to access the new birth.

Many congregations teach that we need to repent to God regularly. Yet, some have understood that their sins past, present and future have been forgiven, but they cannot cease to repent in asking forgiveness, when they realize that they have sinned. Often it is to relieve their own personal feelings. The problem is that often people confuse "repentance" and "asking for forgiveness". These are two things distinct and well separated. When I repent, in practice, I change my way of thinking. That will cause me to act differently, It is quite possible that repentance, (to change your way of thinking) creates in me a need to ask for forgiveness in the case where I have improperly behaved against a person. But forgiveness and repentance are distinct. Repent in some cases may follow on a request for forgiveness, but it is never systematic.

Salvation was given to us by grace, and it is not by trying to do something in return that I will rejoice the heart of God.



We the human, and especially in our society today, have difficulty in accepting and receiving without having done anything for this in return. But yet if I consider that all my sins are already forgiven, it is useless to ask for forgiveness. I'll repent of my mistake, which is to change my way of thinking that my behavior does not happen again. And this is enough for God.

Repent again to God, for access to salvation again, would admit that I realize that I am lost, and that I need to change my current situation. This would require a repentance for access to salvation again. It would require that I will go back to a pain, a suffering, and then a regret at the situation, and then an action that this action cannot be anything else but to accept Jesus in my life. It is an impossible situation.

***Romans 6:10*** *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

Now that we have detailed the various phases of repentance, we understand that if a repentance for the new birth is very real, it cannot be repeated. Because in this case, this would mean that my first repentance was not effective.

Understand me, God is not disappointed, nor has anything against you if you repent asking forgiveness for sin after sin when you are born again. But I would like to tell you today that there is much better for you. If you arrive to integrate this concept of true repentance in your daily life, you'll go from victory to victory, from glory to glory as **2 Corinthians 3: 18**.

Why?

Because you will really feel like a son or a daughter of God. You do not start from scratch whenever you have sinned. You should never feel that God made you big eyes because you have sinned. You will no longer restrain from asking him when you feel the shame of having sinned. To make it short, you're really going to live this life of victory because you act like a real son or a real daughter of your father that created you. This notion is essential for every Christian. If you have not integrated it into your life, you'll have a "yoyo" progression in your spiritual life, and it is not what God has planned for His children.

Stop for a moment.

Think back whenever you have repented in asking forgiveness after your new birth. What was the feeling that was in you? I can assure you that this was not a feeling that pushed you to grow and to go forward. Why? Because you have decided to go through all the steps of repentance.

We cannot integrate the fact that our sins are forgiven once and for all, and to repent in requesting forgiveness regularly to God. It is not compatible.

Then you can tell me, if repentance followed by a request for forgiveness to God cannot be repeated, what do I do when I realize that I have sinned?

I can tell you from experience that, knowing that I no longer have to ask forgiveness for me to repent, that I do not have this 'loophole', gives me more extraordinary strength not to Sin. Since I integrate this dimension of unique repentance in my everyday life, I have gotten rid of some sins which were recurring in my life for more than 20 years. Because I know that I can't do anything in return except to accept that I am already forgiven for what I did. And because of this I don't feel lowered when I sin. Of course when this happens, I am ashamed of myself, sometimes I would even slap myself. But what is sure, is that I do not feel this weight of guilt anymore that used to make me feel five levels below where I should be.

Please understand this. God doesn't give us in any case a license to sin, it is just the opposite. In having integrated this dimension in our lives it empowers us. Knowing that everything is done and forgiven in advance must push me to use His forgiveness as less as possible.

The Apostle Peter understood this notion of repentance. Look at what has happened with Peter. We are just after the point where Jesus washes the feet of the disciples. There Jesus announces that He will be for some of them an opportunity to fall in their faith. On hearing these words Peter claims that he will never deny his master, and that he would give his life for him if it were needed.

**Matthew 26: 31-35** *Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall*

*be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.*

Is Jesus telling His Apostles that they are going to sin? Is Jesus saying to them: “My brothers I announce that you are going to deny me, but you will have to repent and ask me for forgiveness.

No, not at all.

Jesus said nothing of the kind. Instead He says in:

**Luke 22: 31-32** *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

Jesus knows that satan will try to bring the Apostles down. But Jesus said that He prayed for Peter so that the faith he received fails not. (For more details on this subject see my study on the person of Jesus Christ). Jesus said in other words: “Oh Peter, you'll disown me, I know, but I have prayed that you will use all the faith that you have received. And that when you have sinned against me, your faith will push you to continue. That it pushes you back there where you are stopped by changing your way of thinking, and not feeling 5 levels lower.

But Peter, sure of himself continues by saying:

**Luke 22: 33** *And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.*

Peter is really sure of himself, he is certain that he will not sin, that he will not deny his master. But we will see that this statement of Peter will be put to the test.

Comes the moment that Jesus had announced to Peter. We will look at in detail the entire process of denial of Peter, in order to understand his attitude.

The version of Mark 14 is in my opinion the most complete for this first denial of Peter.

**Mark 14: 54** *And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.*

**Mark 14: 66-68** *And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.*

Peter hung back but followed the soldiers who brought Jesus to be judged. Then he remained there, near the spot where Jesus was taken, in the court near the fire. We are in the middle of a cold night. Peter heats up around the fire with others who are there, maybe some curious, some for and others against the arrest of Jesus. There were also bailiffs and servants. Surely there was discussions around the fire, arguments for Jesus, arguments against. But Peter remains cautious, this is no longer the Peter we've seen in **Luke 22:33** who said he will go to jail and even die with Jesus. The sequel shows us that Peter did not make himself known by people around him near the fire. When some could have perhaps said: "This Jesus is an impostor, His teaching does not come from God", Peter did not say: "No, you have it wrong He is the son of God, the Messiah that we expected for so many years, His teaching is true".

No nothing of all this, Peter remains there. He surely starts to think about the statement he made to Jesus in **Luc22: 33**. Peter must begin to feel that he does not apply what he said. He did not think that he sins, merely that he is not doing what he said he would.

Then things get more complicated for Peter.

Let us remember that we are in the period of the Passover. There are many Jews in Jerusalem who do not speak the same language, as many came from foreign regions to celebrate the Passover. It is a bit like a very touristic region of a country where often, in summer, the population is multiplied by 4 or 5 and we can hear all kinds of different languages that are spoken in the streets. In this context we arrive at:

**Mark 14: 66-68** *And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he*

*denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.*

When this maid accuses Peter to be one of those who were with Jesus, Peter lies. He claims not to understand the language of this woman, he make them believe that he is a foreigner. Matthew tells us in this regard:

**Matthew 26: 70** *But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.*

And the Rooster sings for the first time.

Then another opportunity is given to Peter to put into practice the statement he had made to Jesus. But this second situation will only be for Peter as an opportunity to dig a little more into the lie.

**Matthew 26: 71-72** *And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.*

Things are going a little further, because this time Peter made the oath that he did not know Jesus. He says it by making the promise on his honor and considering that what he says is something sacred. This is the definition of an oath.

And things do not arrange for Peter. A little earlier he makes others believe that he is foreign, that he does not understand the language. But an hour later his Galilean accent will betray him. However Peter has had time to think for an hour on both times where he denied Jesus.

Understand me, I do not especially condemn Peter as I'm not better than him. I would just like to point out this journey where Peter has sinned more and more.

**Matthew 26: 73** *And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.*

Peter is sinking more and more in his lies, every opportunity to tell the truth is to him an opportunity of an additional drop. Jesus was right.

**Matthew 26: 74** *Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.*

This time a man comes close to Peter and again accuses him of being one of those who were with Jesus. And Peter added a bit more to his lie, he even cursed. When someone is saying a curse, he wishes unhappiness, he says bad things. A curse is the opposite of a blessing. Peter did not make these curses against Jesus. He also swore, one can assume a profanity. Peter wanted others to believe he was a pagan without any faith. For this he said a profanity, uttered curses. He spent over 3 years with Jesus, and then he rejected everything in bulk. To protect his life, he suggests, acts, and speaks like an ungodly man.

We took time to detail the denials of Peter to understand how far he went in sin. Yet these lies of Peter are not there to condemn him. But on the contrary to show us God's unconditional love.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke tells us that Peter cried bitterly when he realized that he would be not capable of fulfilling the promise of his statement to Jesus.

**Matthew 26: 75** *And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.*

**Luke 22: 61-62** *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*

Do you think the look Jesus gave Peter was accusing?

No, not at all.

It was a loving look that said: "Peter, I told you so, I've been an opportunity to fall for you. " But now repent yourself, in other words, change your way of thinking, move forward and go on with the teaching that I gave you.

Did Peter repent in the way that many practice it today, keeping with himself a feeling of accusation so that it paralyzes him?

No.

Then why did he cry bitterly?

Peter cried because he knew that repentance for the new birth to God does apply only once. He knew that his sins committed a few hours earlier were already forgiven. And such a love of Jesus toward him could only make him cry.

I think that the cause of the weeping of Peter was of two kinds. On the one hand we can assume that he knew that he would not have to repent by asking forgiveness, so that he could do nothing of himself in return for the grace that was offered to him, if, in the future be careful before declaring something before God. But also crying as I said, to this love that has forgiven all his sins. This love that Jesus had when he said: "Before the Cock Crow you shalt deny me three times".

Do not ask for forgiveness does not necessarily mean having no reaction. Peter wept bitterly. But he knew that it would be useless to ask God to forgive his sins because it was already done, as Jesus started to forgive sins when He started to preach the Good News.

I remember many years ago I had made the decision to no longer lie for anything. There were often little things where I was exaggerating, and it wasn't the truth. For several years I stood at this decision, everything was fine. Then one day I had to go to a professional interview. And in conversation I answered "yes" where I should answer "no". And as the interview was going I felt that I could less and less restore the truth. Out of this office, I felt so ridiculous, so disappointed of myself. But also to have been as silly of me be left trapped. I didn't feel the need to repent by asking for forgiveness, because I knew that it would serve no purpose. Understand the process of repentance helped me that day to talk to God as my father who loves me despite my mistakes. This has not prevented me from telling God that I felt silly, I also told Him thank you for this love so great that He has towards me.

Understand me, I didn't go hiding myself. As did Adam go because he had disobeyed. Or as do consciously or unconsciously some Christians when they realize that they have sinned against God. For a time, they do not dare to talk

to God or to Jesus. These kind of thoughts are from demons who want to break my love relationship with my father, with Jesus, and with the Holy Spirit. So do not fall into this trap anymore.

There will never be in your life, a good reason, to talk to God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit no more.

A few years later, it is this same Peter that we found as a leader in acts 1. Do you think that Peter could go on again if he was left overwhelmed, thinking that God was angry with him because he had disowned His son three times? No. Peter had understood that it is not necessary to repent by asking forgiveness again when we Sin before God. Which does not mean that God didn't care because he had sinned, but the love of God is far greater.

You will find no example of a born again person who Jesus asked to repent by asking forgiveness before God when he (or she) has sinned. When Peter spoke out a thought that satan put him and Jesus told him "back from me satan, your thoughts are not mine". Jesus did not say then: "Peter, you have sinned by giving credit to the thought that satan has suggested to you, you have to ask me forgiveness now".

You will find also no examples in the Epistles of the Apostles where such teaching is given. Whenever Paul speaks of a born again person who behaves badly, he never taught to repent by asking forgiveness to God.

When Ananias and Saphira have sinned, Peter has not told "repent and ask for forgiveness". He told them:

**Acts 5: 3-4** *But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.*

It is voluntarily that I do not go in the next part of Ananias and Saphira, because that is another topic. But we see nowhere else that it comes to ask forgiveness in the admonition of Peter towards them. Why? Because this was not necessary.



**1 Corinthians 5: 1** *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.*

**1Cor. 5: 5-7** *To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:*

When Paul addresses the Corinthians because they practiced very unholy habits, like some who had physical relations with their mother-in-law, we consider that these are practices that deserve to be chastised. And it is precisely what Paul did. But still, there is no question of repentance with a request for forgiveness to God. Paul said that this man should be kicked out of the Church, so that he could get account of the negative emphasis of his actions. By this sanction, this man will live the consequences of his sin, hoping that he will repent and get back to the church.

Often some get confuse and make an amalgam. There is the fact of sinning against God only, and sinning against God and at the same time against another human being.

It is important to have always in mind, why it is not necessary to repent again asking forgiveness to God. This is not necessary because God is the one who has the power to forgive me in advance for my sins when I was born again. The fact of no longer having to ask forgiveness to God results solely from the fact that the forgiveness of my sins will remain still active no matter what I do, from the moment when I was born again.

We human beings do not have the power to forgive ourselves in advance as God can do. No one can say: "I forgive in advance anyone, for what he (or she) has done to me". It is a statement that no human being could say and even less do. That is why the bible teaches us to repent by asking forgiveness to each other. When I sin against another human being nothing is automatic, the repentance must be mutual, it must come from both parties.

Both parties?

Yes, absolutely.

If I sin against my brother or my sister in Christ, there is need of repentance with forgiveness to restore the relationship.

Remember the first step of repentance, is to realize a situation, and this situation generates suffering in me, because I want to stop this situation. If I don't love my neighbor, I couldn't generate a repentance in myself. This is a good barometer for me, when I realize that I have sinned against my brother or my sister, I have just one thing in mind, operate the repentance.

- I realize the situation between the person and me.
- This situation gives me pain, because I love.
- I express a regret that this circumstance has come to pass.
- I decided to act. I ask for forgiveness, I show my love, I desire a return to a relationship of brotherly love.

Often the person who has suffered the sin of another, thinks he has nothing to do. This person thinks that he/she has to wait until the other comes to respond in his repentance towards him/her. This is not quite accurate. Even if it is not me who has sinned, I still have to convey repentance. Remember, God himself practiced repentance because of human beings, yet God does not sin. Yet the bible shows us that He repents.

Of course the repentance will not be the same content on the last phase. If I did nothing wrong I don't have to ask for forgiveness. But nevertheless, I have to activate a repentance on my side which will consist of:

- Realize the situation between me and the person.
- Have a suffering because the relationship is altered.
- Express a regret that things have come to this point.
- I decide to accept the forgiveness of the other.

These points above are also repentance which is just as important as the previous one. Unfortunately, it happens that some people think that they have nothing else to do other than to wait to see the other come to repentance. We must realize that a sin against my brother or my sister, will require a repentance on both sides so that sin is forgotten on both sides. And so, in this sense we are responsible for each other. Sinning against my brother or my sister will encroach on the spiritual freedom.

***Romans 12:18*** *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

This verse among others shows us that, in a conflict, it is possible that one repents, but the other refuses to activate a repentance. This may be the one who has sinned or the one who has not sinned, or even the two who sinned against each other.

Repentance and forgiveness are therefore necessary for our Christian life and attitudes. But we should use them in the full knowledge of their different phases.

Am I where I have sinned against God only? In this case the forgiveness is unnecessary and will only appease myself. The fact I regret my attitude and change my way of thinking is here, a repentance, but I never need to forward a request for forgiveness for it. Paul is very clear in:

***Hebrews 10:18*** *Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

Asking for forgiveness is an offering, and it becomes totally useless when Jesus has already forgiven all my sins.

Am I where I have sinned against another human being? In this case I need to quickly engage a repentance in myself, with a last phase of application in asking for forgiveness and love.

Am I in a case of someone has sinned against me? In this case I must also initiate a repentance in myself, but this time with a last phase of love and acceptance.

Here are two verses that well summarize the various cases of repentance.

**Luke 17:3** *Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.*

**2 Corinthians 7: 8-9** *For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. 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.*

When I am born again, I am a just person who no longer needs to repent to God by asking for forgiveness. I'm a son or a daughter who can keep this relationship as strong, also powerful with his father, even if I have sinned.

**Luke 15:7** I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

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