

## Attitude #2 - Repentance

**Matthew 5:4 - Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. I believe that Jesus can and will create in me a new way of life.**

Biblical repentance - The saving grace wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, whereby a sinner is made aware of his sin, is grieved and humble before God on account of it, not so much for the punishment to which the sin has made him accountable, but that God is dishonored and offended and His word violated. The knowledge of our need to repent is then followed by our opportunity to experience it; we turn from our sin and ask the Lord to forgive us and receive Jesus Christ as our Savior.

For the believer who has already trusted Christ as Savior repentance will still be a part of their walk with God, not regarding their need for salvation, but their need to stay in right fellowship with the Lord. Following our salvation experience we will again rebel against the Lord, we hope not the degree that we may have taken it to in the past prior to coming to Christ, but saved people are forgiven, not made perfect. This repentance comes at times when we are convicted and made aware by the Holy Spirit that we have sinned against the Lord.

**1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

We know that this verse speaks to the Christian by the evidence given whereby John calls those that he is writing his letter to "brethren".....in **1 John 2:7, 3:13,14&16.**

Since we have made the case regarding what repentance is, can we make a case for what repentance looks like? In other words, when a person has truly repented what does his or her life look like? Is there evidence of repentance in a visible way? In **Matthew 3:2,8** we see that John the Baptist speaks to the fact that it does look like something and there are other places in the Bible that speak to that evidence in the life of the believer as well.

**Matthew 3:2,8 - And saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance:**

In **Matthew 3:2,8** we see John the Baptist bearing witness to the arrival of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He first says to "repent" and then he says that following, we are to "bear fruits worthy of repentance." We could translate that instruction by saying, "repent and do things suitable for repentance"..... Or, "let your life prove your change of heart".....it does look like something!!

### Our Biblical example:

**Acts 16:25-34 - And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.**

There was an incident that had taken place in **verses 16-24**, of the same chapter, where a woman the Bible describes as being possessed with a “**spirit of divination**”. She was possessed by an evil spirit that dictated confusing answers to those who consulted her, which served to gratify their desire to know things to come, but often deceived them. In those days of ignorance and idolatry, the devil, by the divine permission of God, led people captive at his will; and he could not have gained such adoration from them as he had if he had not pretended to give predictions to them. This lady **brought her masters much gain by soothsaying; (verse 16)** many came to consult this witch for the discovery of robberies, the finding of things lost, and especially to be told their fortune, and when they came they had rewards in their hands, according to the quality of the person and the importance of the case. There were many that were kept just for fortune-tellers, but this lady must have been a bit more than that for them; for, while others brought some gain, she **brought much gain to her masters**, being consulted more than any other.

So then, when Paul had discerned her deception he cast the evil spirit out of her in the name of Jesus Christ (**verse 18**) which when her masters had seen this happen, caught Paul and Silas and through a series of events had them thrown in prison for the simple reason of not being able to make money off of her anymore.

After they had “**laid many stripes upon them**” (they had beaten them) they cast them into the “**inner prison**” where they firmly placed the shackles on their feet; here is where we pick up our story.

What we see in our story and how this story relates to repentance "looking like something."

**1. Vs. 25 - The witness of Paul and Silas. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.**

When we are made aware of what took place just before Paul and Silas were placed in prison and why they were there, we might understand the need they had to pray, but to sing praises to the Lord brings most of us into uncharted waters. Remember, **Verse 23** tells us that the commanders rip the clothes off their backs and "**laid many stripes upon them**". No doubt they had open wounds when they were singing praises to the Lord and yet it did not stop them. Paul and Silas saw that there must have been a greater purpose for their present adversity.

We could not say for sure what Paul and Silas prayed for that night. What it was we do not know, but what we do know, is that their heart was stirred to praise God and when it did others heard it. So, we see their prayers affected them and their prayers affected those around them.

**2. Vs. 26-29 - The fear from God's response. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,**

When we look back at **Acts 12:19** we see good reason for the jailer to be alarmed when he thought that the prisoners had escaped. He knew that his life would be given in exchange for any lives that had escaped under his watch. But there are several things that we see under the surface here.....

- **His fear was the door to his experience.**

The earthquake woke the jailer up and what he saw led to his crisis; what Paul saw saved the jailer's life and what Paul did revealed the jailers' need. **MANY** are the testimonies of God's people that came to know the Lord out of some sort of adversity or crisis and not as much out of their comfort. The adversity seldom ceases until the repentance takes place.

**Psalms 50:15 - And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.**

One man speaks of adversity something like this..... Evil as it affects us; the troubles and problems of life; the effects of sin or tribulations and trials; our adversities are all the hindrances and obstacles, the problems and needs that come to us in this life.

However, if the Lord chooses to use adversity to mold us, shape us and turn our lives from the direction that is destructive and careless to the direction of His provision and protection, then adversity will have turned out to be a good thing.

**3. Vs. 30-32 - The answer to every man's need. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.**

This man was made aware of his need, and he had the courage to ask Paul and Silas how that life saving need could be met. What Paul and Silas did not say is as important as what they did say. They did not tell him anything regarding any type of ceremonial ritual or tradition regarding any religious labor. They simply told him that he needed to put his faith and trust in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ in order that he might be saved; that is biblical repentance.

**Romans 10:9,10&13 - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

**4. Vs. 33,34 - The evidence of repentance. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.**

What an incredible picture of repentance, reconciliation, and the loving servant, all wrapped up in one. In an open and loving way, we see the jailer making amends with his former captives for the injury that he had caused them. He was now showing, by his actions, his gratitude for the kindness Paul and Silas had shown him by introducing him and his family to Jesus Christ.

He took them at the same hour of the night, would not let them lie a minute longer in the inner prison, but instead washed their wounds and brought them to his own house. A physical meal was

prepared for them because of the spiritual meal that Paul and Silas had prepared for the jailer and his family. Before the jailer was saved, no condition was too bad for Paul and Silas to endure, but after the jailer was saved, he could make no provision that was too good for them. All we can say to that is, **"What a difference Jesus makes!!"**