

Regret or Repentance
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Turn your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 7. This is an old message that I have preached, and it is a revival message. We need to cry again. We need our hearts broken again. That is the reason for this message. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11. Paul had written to the church concerning the matter of sin in the camp telling them to deal with it. They dealt with a fornicator in the church. They dealt with it as common knowledge, and they were not even concerned about it or the man that was brought to repentance. He writes to the church to take the man back. That is the purpose of church discipline, not to get rid of. The purpose is to bring to repentance. That is the purpose of it. He writes concerning what he wrote and what he did to them. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11: *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. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

Our Father, in Jesus' name, tonight, wilt Thou again, we pray, not revive us again that Thy people may rejoice in Thee? I yield myself, nothing from myself, but all from Thee tonight. I pray that Thou would use my mind, my heart, my will, my emotions, Heavenly Father, my spirit, and my body this evening. Oh God, we need Thee. We need revival. In Jesus' name, Amen.

I want to speak tonight on the subject, "Regret or Repentance." There is a desperate need for this matter of repentance. This is a desperate hour, and only repentance will meet the need of this hour. We have forgotten the holiness of God. You read the articles in the newspapers, and you watch the television. God is just the Santa Clause. He is just the "Old Man" that hands out. If you just say, "Please," He hands out everything to you. We have lost the consciousness of the holiness of God. A consciousness of the holiness of God would put everyone of us on our face in this church tonight, without exception. We have forgotten about the holiness of God. The book of Revelation talks about the seraphims. Let me read it to you. Revelation 4:8: *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* There are creatures around the throne of God tonight that cease not day and night saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." Heaven will not forget and does not forget that God is holy. Isaiah was crying, "Woe! Woe! Woe!" in the fifth chapter until he caught a glimpse of God. It was not, "Woe!" to the people; it was, *Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.* We have lost that. When we lose our holiness of God, we become proud and bigoted, and we are somebody down here on earth. In trying to deify man, we humanize God. There is a scarcity of, "Woe is me!" at the altar. There is a scarcity of, "Woe is me! I am undone" at the altar, anyplace, and anywhere. Though we have shallow converts, a shallow sense of sin, a shallowed consciousness because of the lack of real genuine Holy Spirit repentance, we have regret instead. Being sorrowful and regretful is not repentance. I will try to show you the difference in the Word of God a little later on.

The Bible commands us to repent, not to penance but to repent. The first message of the New Testament was by John the Baptist, and the first words of his message are found in Matthew 3:1-2: *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The Son of God, in Mark 1:14-15, says: *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.* In Acts 2:38, Simon Peter's message on the day of Pentecost was a message of *repent ye.* In Acts 17:30-31, Paul said to the elite in Mars' Hill to the educated of his day: *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Look at the message of the Great Commission in Luke 24:46-47: And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. There is no forgiveness without repentance. The last message unto the Church is not the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I remind you that the book of Revelation said: *Behold, I come quickly*, but there are seven messages written to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Out of eight times to five of those seven churches, he said, “Repent! Repent! Repent! Repent!” The last message to the Church is a matter of repentance. Now, that is an absolute necessity. There is no salvation without repentance, and there is no revival without repentance. When we get saved, we just start repenting. It is a life-long process, as believers, of repenting; and we know that after we get saved, we realize we are in far worse shape than we were before we got saved. The longer that you live, the more undone you realize that you are apart from the grace of God. Salvation just begins this experience of repenting and repenting. He says to the church, “Repent! You’ve lost your first love.” He said to the church, “Repent! You have lowered your standards.” He says to another church, “Repent! You have become worldly.” He said to another church, “Repent! You have got a name that you live, but you are dead.” He said to the last church, “Because you said, ‘I am rich, and I do not have any need of anything.’” What was he saying? A church that is apathetic is a church without any consciousness of need or any consciousness of a world need. The church was neither hot nor cold. The church was not against anything and was not for anything. They were in the middle of the road. God said, “Repent!” Now, that is the last message.

Let us look at the necessity of repentance. **NUMBER ONE, THERE IS NO FORGIVENESS WITHOUT REPENTANCE.** I quoted Luke 24:46. Let me read it to you again. Luke 24:46-47: *And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* Did you know that it talks about if somebody sins against you to rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him? God cannot forgive without repentance. The person that does not repent does not think he has done anything. What happens? It is an impossibility to forgive somebody or to forgive anybody without repentance. There is no forgiveness without repentance.

NUMBER TWO, THERE IS NO BELIEVING IN CHRIST WITHOUT REPENTANCE. There is a strange passage in Matthew 21:32. The Pharisees were standing there. Here is repentance. Matthew 21:28 What is repentance? It is a change of mind that changes your direction 180 degrees. It is an about-face. Jesus gives an illustration of repentance. Matthew 21:28-32: *But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: (I am not going to do it.) but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. (“Yes, sir, I am going. Yes, sir, I am going. Yes, sir, I am going. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.”) Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.* You cannot really savingly trust Christ without repentance. They are Siamese twins. If you genuinely trust Christ, you genuinely repent. If you genuinely repent, you would trust Christ. They are used interchangeably in the Scriptures. I repeat again that repentance and faith are Siamese twins. You cannot separate them one from the other. He said, “You did not repent that you might believe.” There is no forgiveness without repentance. There is no believing in Christ without repentance. There is no escape from judgement without repentance. In Luke 13, twice in the first six verses, Jesus said: *I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* 2 Peter 3:9: *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* Those who do not repent perish.

The prodigal must return in sorrow if he is to be reinstated. The prodigal son did not come back with a chip on his shoulder. If you have got a chip on your shoulder, and you are supposedly coming back from sin,

you need to go back to the hog pin and come back again, because you did not come out of the hog pin right. Repentance takes the chip off your shoulder, the cockiness out of your heart, and the stiffness out of your back. We have a whole lot of so-called repentance today. It is not repentance. If you do not repent, you will go to hell. You will go to hell. God cannot forgive you. The prodigal must return in sorrow if he is to be reinstated. The saint must repent if he is to be restored to fellowship. The rebel must admit before mercy can be exercised and favor restored. Before there can be a right relationship with a Holy God, the sinner has to come back with a consciousness that he is a sinner and that his sin is against the Holy Son. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.*

NUMBER THREE, REGRET OR SORROW IS NOT REPENTANCE. Turn to 2 Corinthians 7. I want us to look at these words. This is the heart of my message. 2 Corinthians 7. Regret or sorrow is not repentance, and it is not sufficient. It is not sufficient for revival and not sufficient for salvation. There is a confusion about repentance. A man thought he was dying one time, and he called his worst enemy and said, “I am sorry that I have done this to you and that I have said all this about you. I am going to meet God. But, if I live, I want you to know that it is all off.” There are a lot of people who get in trouble, and they do not repent. They are sorrowful that they are in the trouble. The evidence that they do not repent is that just as soon as the cloud is lifted, they go right back to where they were. You did not repent. A repentance that did not alter your character and change your directions is not repentance. Paul uses several words; in 2 Corinthians 7:9, he uses the word *sorry*. *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance:* The word here is the Greek word *lefel*. It means to grieve or to make sad. I read about a fellow who really was mad, and his name was Herod. In Mark 6, you remember how John the Baptist danced. No, he did not dance. Excuse me. The girl danced. Herod promised to give her up to the kingdom. She went back to Mama and said, “Mama, tell me what do you want.” Mama said, “Well, I would like that preacher’s head in the platter.” She went back to request the head of John the Baptist. Mark 6:22-27: *And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. (Look at what he said.) And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath’s sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: And he said, “Sorry about that, John.”*

I remember a little lady — this is funny, but this is not funny — who had a very tender heart. She and her husband bought a farm. She was not used to farm life, and she got too attached to the animals — the chickens, the fowls, and everything on the farm. She would not drink the milk of the cows. It was a pet. She got attached. One day, she had company, and she was going to kill the chicken. I did not read this in a book. She took the pet chicken out there and grabbed it by the head and yelled, “I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry!” If she had been repenting, she would have stopped and said, “I’m through with that.” A lot of people say, “I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry!” No, if you are sorry, repentance will make you quit what you are being sorry about. Herod said, “Sorry about that, John the Baptist. I’m really, I mean, I’m sorry about that; but I have got to cut your head off.” A lot of that is done at altars. Now, that is the first word.

The next word is found in 2 Corinthians 7:8, and that is the word *regret*. Verse 8: *For though I made you sorry (Notice the marginal reference.) with a letter, I do not repent:* Both of these words are the words *regret*. It is the same word used about Judas Iscariot in Matthew 27:3: *Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and he went out and committed suicide.* The word means to be careful and concerned with. Too great to be forgiven, Judas committed suicide. But, there is regret that says, “Look at what it has got me into.” It did not bring him to repentance; it brought him to suicide. He could not live with himself. Consequently, by the way, more people try to make Judas the good guy and try to make the Lord Jesus the wicked one in television on this last temptation of Christ. I want to tell you today that Judas Iscariot went to hell. He was not a good guy; he was a traitor; he was a devil. He repented, but he regretted the thing of what it had got him into. A man can cry a barrelful of tears. Why? He did something, and he lost his

job over it. I remember a man who was sitting in the front seat of my car. He lost twenty or thirty years of seniority on the railroad, and he cried. He cried a bucketful of tears. What was he crying for? He was crying for the mess that he was in. Young people can mess up their lives and cry a bucketful of tears because of what it has done to them. Repentance is not concerned about what it has done to you; it is concerned about what it has done to God. We have the word *regret* and the word *repentance*. They will not do with God. It is centered around self-interest. The sorrow of the world worketh death. It mourns over the consequences of sin. It is regret for worldly loss that brings self-vexation. It is not for wrong doing but for damage endured. I remember a man who was caught for stealing. He was not even crazy, but he was talking to himself. He said, "I told you not to steal that stuff. I told you, man. They apprehended. I told you not to do that. I told you." He was bringing somebody else in that he told that he stole; now, what is he doing? He was sorry for the mess that he got in. That is not repentance. That is not repentance. "Boy, what a fix I'm in!" I want to remind you, again, that that is not repentance. That is a matter of regret over something to yourself — you know, wrong done, damage endured, advantages missed, and pride wounded. Tears, good notations, vows, resolutions, or leaving off your sins will take the place of repentance. Again, this thing of regret or remorse is the result that it works death. When rebuked or chastened, the fantasy is wounded; anger is excited; and resentment is allowed. When you do something and repent, and somebody rebukes you for it, you do not get mad. You do not resent. I am going to tell you that a man and a woman in a marriage will not last unless there is repentance. A man and a woman might slip out on their mates, and they want to bring their home back together. There must be repentance. If there is regret, "Well, I've got an embarrassing situation that I found myself in," and remorse with the pressure of the family, that will not work. Do you know why? The individual will go back home always with a chip on his shoulder, angry and lashing out. They will do that unless there is repentance. Where there is repentance, they will make the husband or wife that they never could have been -- the best husband or wife that is ever possible because repentance says, "I do not want to hurt you again." Regret or remorse is about, "Hey, me!" Repentance is about somebody else. A home, without the matter of repentance, brings friction and wounded vanity. It brings resistance. You can tell if the person really repented or not. This matter of regret or repentance results in what? It works death. It is unprofitable in that it confirms the matter of a bittered and shortened life. What happens? He got mad; and when he got mad and when nobody took his advice, he hung himself. I had a phone call from a woman with a house full of kids. "I am tired of these screaming kids." I got ready to hear my outline on this phone call Thursday. I vaguely remember it. The kids are crying in the background. "I am tired of these screaming kids. I am tired of it. I want to take my life." That was not repentance. That was a message upon *me*: "I am going to get out of it." That is self-interest. Regret and remorse are primarily self-interest.

Let us look at some illustrations of false repentance. Number one, Judas. Number two, Cain. Cain killed his brother. Why did he kill his brother? Cain killed his brother because his brother had favor with God. The fire evidently came down and consumed Abel's sacrifice, but the fire did not come down and consume Cain's sacrifice. Cain said, "My punishment is more than I can bear." He was not concerned about the fact that he killed his brother; he was concerned about the fact that, "Hey, wait a minute! Wait a minute! You're too rough on me. It's greater than I can bear." That is not repentance.

Another illustration is Pharaoh in Exodus 9:27. Pharaoh got in the corner, and the pressure was on him. I will just give you one instance in Exodus 9:27: *And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.* When the plague was off, he went right back to where he was. When you repent, you are through. When a Christian repents about something, he is through with it. I am constantly dealing with people who have remorse and regret but do not deal with the thing in the matter of repentance. Repentance will solve any problem there is. Pharaoh mourned and was sorrowful. He wanted honor.

1 Samuel 24:16. Listen to this. You may say, "He really got right with God." 1 Samuel 24:16-20: *And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto*

me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. He lifted up his voice, wept, and went back. When the pressure was off, Saul tried to kill David again. That is false repentance. 2 Corinthians 7:10: *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

Turn to Luke 15. The Scripture says that there is joy in presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. The hardest thing in the world for man to do is repent. I read in Luke 15:14 about a young man. Young people, listen carefully to me. I have lived here twenty-five years. I know that. I have seen bored young people grow up in this church, and then I have seen them head for the hog pen. In my memory, I do not remember any that came back. Now, you let that soak in. I have seen you play around and do something wrong. I have no memory — it might have happened — of those who have said, “Brother, I want my liberty,” and have headed for the hog pen coming back. Do not come up with that idea, “Well, I’m going to sow my wild seeds, and I’m going to go to the hog pen, and I’ll come back.” I do not remember any coming back. Look at this young fellow in Luke 15. He started off saying, “Give me”; and from, “Give me,” he wound up saying, “Make me.” Let us start with verse 11: *And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.* Did you know that when a young man decides to go to the hog pen, you cannot stop him? If a young girl decides to go to the hog pen, you cannot build a fence around her; you cannot live with her twenty-four hours a day. I guarantee you that if they are determined to go to the hog pen, they will break out; they will climb out. You just pray, pray, pray; but you cannot keep them from going to the hog pen. Luke 15:12-13: *And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country,* (“I want to get away from Dad and Mom and away from restrictions. I want to get out there where there is liberty and freedom. I want to get out there where they really live. I am going out to Chesterfield County. I am going to Marbolo County. I am going out there where I have got all this liberty and freedom and where nobody tells me what time to come in or who to run with or whether I can smoke or drink or cuss. Nobody can tell me that.” Yes, sir, you are free to go, but your freedom to come back is very difficult, because when you get in the hog pen, you have got chains on you.) *and there wasted his substance with riotous living.* (He did not intend to spend it all; he was just going to have a good time. The load of sin goes down hill; and when you hit, it picks up speed. You go faster and faster and faster. He had spent all.) *And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.* When you have tried it all, you are going to find emptiness of heart. I visited last Thursday night, and I was in a young man’s house. The little boy, fourteen years old, had an earring in his ear. This little boy had dissipation written all over his face. I knew he had been dissipating. I knew he had been doing something terrible — a fourteen-year-old boy. He was cocky, and I talked to him. I talked to him about his soul. With a house full of little babies and kids, I could not talk to him; but after a while, I talked to him. I said, “Son, young man, do you know that you are a sinner?” He said, “Yes, sir.” I said, “Where do sinners go?” He said, “They go to hell.” I said, “Do you want to go there?” He said, “No, sir.” I said, “You don’t have to go there.” But his face — if I had had time I would have said, “Son, what you have been doing is playing with sin. It is written all over your face. When you play with sin, it comes out in your face. You think you are hiding it, but it is revealed in your face. We may not know what it is, but your face tells us you are playing with sin.”

I remember Jay Feebee. He could not remember how in the world his mama knew everything. He said he would get out from smoking behind some bushes, and his mama would come and beat him or whip him. He said, “I could not understand. She could not see through those bushes. Why in the world? I didn’t realize the smoke was going above the bushes like an Indian sending signals.” He said, “I couldn’t figure it out.” Look now at Luke 15:17: *And when he came to himself,* (When you play with sin, you will not face yourself.) *he said, How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare,* (Yes, sir, that is the real life out there. That is liberty and freedom. It will put you on skid row. It will put you in the gutter. It will put you

out there, listen, with the whoremongers and adulterers and liars and cheats and stealers. It will put you there. Now, he is in the hog pen.) *and I perish with hunger!* He said, "Well, hey, it was not so bad after all." Many young people do not know what they have back home until they are way out yonder and have squandered it all and then think about back home. I repeat tonight, young people, you are thinking about liberty and freedom. You do not know what you have at home. The Devil lies to you. *I perish with hunger! I will arise* (Many people sit in the hog pen and say, "I am going to get out of here. I will arise. Yes, sir, I am going to get out of here. I am going to get out of here. I am going to get out of here. Yes, I am going to get out of here." You just wait for your time.) *I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father.* There are a lot of people in the hog pen. "Yes, sir, I am going to get out of here. I am going to get out of here. I am going to get out of here." You are wasting your time. GET OUT! If you are playing with sin, your parents do not know when you are telling the truth or not when you are doing all that. You are already eating hog food, and you are just a step away from the hog pen, and you will not stop. I am telling you tonight that all your resolutions will not keep you out of the hog pen. The only thing that will keep you out of the hog pen is REPENTANCE. The only thing that will stop your downward progression is REPENTANCE. "I am going to do this, and I am going to take the blame." You may tell Dad that you got in the wrong crowd: "You know, Dad, I got in the wrong crowd. They made me drink. They made me smoke pot. They did all that! No, he said, "I did this." What did he say? *I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven,* (All of a sudden, this fellow is concerned that a Holy God is watching him.) *and in thy sight,* All of sudden, he realized that his sin was against GOD. David, when he repented, was conscience that his sin was first against God. He does not say anything about Bathsheba and Uriah. He said in Psalm 51:2: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.* We need to come back and realize that we have sinned against a Holy God. Not only did he plead guilty, but also he said, "I'm no more worthy." I see folks who are supposed to have repented, and they still do not act like it. You will not convince me in a million years of repentance. When you repent, you do not have any sense that anybody owes you anything. There is a consciousness that you are filled up in sin. You see people holding onto possessions; but when published and caught up, not with temptation but in sin, they say, "I'm going to get it back." How in the world? We need some repentance. When you regret in remorse and in tears, all the sob stories do not do the job. There is a consciousness of unworthiness. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son:* He said, "If you would just let me be one of the hired servants, I will not even sleep in the house." No, you come back and say, "Where is my room? Where is my bed? Where is my dresser? Where are my clothes?" You have not repented, buddy or sister. You are a hypocrite. You are making matters worse by acting like you are sorry. You are not sorry. You are sorry for the inconveniences that it has caused you. If you do not repent, you will die and go to hell. When he repented, he found out that his daddy was not like he thought he was. There are young people who do not know their parents. They do not know their parents because of their wrong attitude. The wrong attitude comes out of the matter of sin. He did not think that his daddy loved him. Oh, my soul, did dad love him? Dad had been watching day and night the roads. Look at the verse: *But when he was yet a great way off. . .* Moms and dads cry at night over a wayward son or a wayward daughter. They cry. They plead. They beg. They have heartaches. "They do not love me." You have been listening to a lie. They have sleepless nights. Their pillow is wet with tears. Out in the darkness of sin somewhere in the night, somebody is breaking their hearts. See ol' dad on the front porch. He is looking. He is watching that road. One day, there is a hollering and screaming, and he is off of that porch and heading down the road. *But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him.* His father saw him before he ever saw his father. Well, he had his speech made up. *His father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.* "Well, I did not know Dad was affectionate." *He is the same as when you left home. Dad has not changed. You changed. This guy had repented. When you repent, I guarantee, you have got a new set of parents. When you repent, you have got a new set of eyes. 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: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and*

is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. He said, "I have been saving that calf down here, feeding that calf. I have been fattening that calf for this day when you come home." Let me tell you something. Are you listening? That is the son's party, and this is the serious, sober part of it — dad's forgiveness and restoration of fellowship. I want to tell you that when the party is over, you do not get your inheritance back that you threw away in the hog pen. They clap their hands and rejoice for the repentant person coming back. When they take what is coming to them, "It is all my fault," they do not blame anybody. They do not get mad at God. They do not get mad at anybody else. Why? They repented and said, "Hey, if I get anything, that is less than I deserve." There is not a whole lot of that around here is there? Am I right? Revelations 4:8: *They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy.* Oh, how we need a revival of the holiness of God that makes us see what we are! 2 Corinthians 7:10: *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.*

In Acts 20:21, he preached: *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.* Turn to Luke 23. We have an old thief, a murderer. He was a violent man. You just name it, and he was there. He was on the cross, and he was Barabbas. Barabbas escaped the cross because Jesus took his place. He was part of the selection. Look at Luke 23:39. These are partners in crime. *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him,* (You read in Matthew about both of them cursing and swearing and blaspheming the Son of God.) *saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.* "If You are Christ, get us out of this." When he hit the ground, he was going back to a life of crime. If in jail you repent, when you get out, you will live for God. Young ladies or young men, if you run with a man or a girl that is going to the hog pen, you will go to the hog pen with them. You need to DROP THEM! You need to drop them with no resent. Look at Luke 23:39: *But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (Do not you fear God?) And we indeed justly; (Well, wait a minute. Where in the world do you hear him say, "I am getting what I deserve.?"?) And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* This man had no resent against being punished for wrong doing. He did not blaspheme the Roman government for crucifying him. He did not rail out at the soldier. He said, "I am getting what I deserve." That is repentance! Through repentance is a recognition that sin basically injures and insults God. I have already quoted Psalm 51:4: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.* Oh how we need that! I read the book. I read the crucifixion scene. I said, "Oh God, if I had read something about a soldier, I would have cried. It would have broken my heart." I read the crucifixion scene, and I read it with blind eyes and a cold heart. When you read the scene of crucifixion, does it break your heart over the fact that you nailed Him there with your sins and my sins and the consciousness that we broke the heart of God?

Now, let us look at the best illustration that I have ever seen in the Scripture. I have given some good illustrations of repentance. Would you quickly turn to the book of Genesis? In Genesis 37, you have brothers that sold their baby brother into slavery. Judah seems to be the primary instigator. Genesis 27:23-27: *And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat (Joseph was his daddy's favorite. He should not have been, but he was his favorite. That little coat signified the favor of dad, and the brothers hated Joseph. They were jealous and envious of that.) they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh.* They sold him. When they sold him, they could care less about their father's heart. All they were thinking about was self-interest. "We do not like him. He is a tattletale. He is dad's delight." They had this coat. There was no concern in their heart for their dad whose heart was attached

to Joseph — no concern whatsoever. They sold him and went their way. They came back to dad with the bloody coat. They said, “Look at what we found. Is this Joseph’s coat?” They lied and acted like hypocrites. They were hypocrites. It broke Jacob’s heart. I read a little later on, and I wish I had time for the whole thing. They went down to Egypt to get corn, wheat, and so forth. Joseph recognized and talked to the rest of them. Look at Genesis 42:21-22: *And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.* He said, “Man alive! something happened to us because of the fact that we sold Joseph. We are in trouble.” No lie. Turn to Genesis 42:37. Reuben goes back home and tells them, “We cannot go back unless we have our younger brother with us.” Jacob says, “No, Joseph is not, and you left Simon down there. You want to take Benjamin -- all these things are against me.” *And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.* Reuben said, “If I do not bring him back, you can kill two of my boys.” There is still no concern for a broken-hearted daddy. Look at Genesis 43:8-9. Judah steps up. *And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:* He said, “If I have to stay, I will stay there, and I will let him go.” There is still no repentance over a broken-hearted daddy that they lied to and deceived. Turn to Genesis 44. Remember how Joseph put the silver cup in the bag of Benjamin, and they brought them back to the city. The brothers fell before Joseph, and Joseph said, “What in the world are you doing?” Let us begin at verse 16: *And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? (It is all we now.) God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord’s servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.* (He said, “None of us are going back.” That is not repentance.) *And he said,* (He is trying to find out if his brothers have repented over the sin against him and against his daddy. He is trying to find out if they are repentant. He knows who they are.) *God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.* (“The rest of you go back to your daddy.” Now watch. This is a beautiful story of what repentance does in the human heart. It changes its reference from self-interest to God-interest. It changes from self-interest to the one-that-has-been-hurt-interest.) *Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord’s ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.* (This the first time love is mentioned. . . . *his father loveth him.*) *And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.* (“Hey, my daddy cannot take this. It will break his heart. He will die of a stroke. He will die of a heart attack.”) *And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man’s face, except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.* (Think about stepping into the throne room, about stepping in to the heart of his daddy, and about feeling the agony of his daddy and the situation.) *Now therefore when (not the we) I come to thy servant my father, (It is no longer when we go back; it is a personal matter.) and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad’s life; It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant (I did.) became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up*

to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father. That is repentance. He said, "I cannot. I saw my daddy broken. I have seen him grieve all these years over the little boy that is not, and I cannot stand to go back without him. I have seen my dad, and it would break his heart. I cannot stand that." Now watch. Look at Genesis 45:1: *Then (You can trust him now.) Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.* (Hey, Let me just insert a little word of prophesy. Acts 7 talks about the children of Israel. They sold the Lord Jesus. Joseph is a type of Christ. They sold him. The second time when He comes, they mourn. Israel is repentant at the close of the tribulation period nationally when they cry over the fact that they crucified the Messiah. What happens? He reveals himself to Israel. When does He reveal Himself to the sinner? When they repent. That is where He begins.) *Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.* That is repentance. Look at the trouble. "I do not know what I did to deserve that." Wait a minute. When we sin, we sin against the heart of God. Revival is bringing it back to the first day when we lost our first love. Our first love was God. "Oh, God, You loved me so much that You gave Your Son, and we do not want to break Your heart. We do not want to displease you." What happens? We get away, and we are concerned about number one — self-interest. The Lord said, "Now, wait a minute. Repent." This brings about the blessing of repentance at the revelation of the Savior. The father's heart was revealed when this young man came home. I want to tell you tonight that if you are sitting here, and you are lost, God will not reveal Himself in forgiveness and sweetness until you repent. Regret will not do it. Remorse will not do it. Tears will not do it. It is repentance over what we have done to God. Acts 20:21: *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.* Who do you sin against? You sin against God. We are Christians. Revival comes when God's people repent. 2 Chronicles 7:14: *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.* What is that? That is repentance. I want to tell you tonight that if you are a Christian messing around, dabbling around in the world, and dabbling around in the hog pen, all of your coming to church, all of your listening, all of your hypocrisy, and all of your promises, and all of your trying to fool somebody is not fooling anybody but yourself. You will not get out of the hog pen, and you will not get off the road to the hog pen until you repent. Did you know repentance makes alcoholics dry? Did you know repentance makes a fornicator pure? If you never repent, you will never get saved. If you want revival, you cannot send it down, and you cannot work it up. It comes when we face what we have done against God. In this world, we have seen God's name blasphemed, and some Christians are not upset about that wicked, ungodly, profane film, and they write to the newspaper saying they are a Christian and wondering why you are getting upset? What if it was your daddy that was blasphemed, and we did not get upset? If we have the heart of God, we are hurt when God's heart is hurt. But, we are only concerned about that when it hurts us. Repentance brings us back to, "Oh God." He gave His Son. That song grips my heart. "Shall I crucify my Savior? Shall I crucify Him?"