



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[A Love That Won't Walk Away-Kathy Troccoli](#)

[Take Your Candle-Kathy Trocoli](#)

[I Will Go-Crystal Lewis](#)

Prayer

Lord, I ask You to please forgive me for the times I've been an unfaithful friend. I know there have been times in my life when I gossiped and talked about people who were supposed to be my close friends. And I didn't stop there. Rather than confess what I did and ask for forgiveness, I tried to cover it up by acting like I hadn't done anything wrong. I am so sorry for what I have done. Please forgive me for lying. Please forgive me for being a phony in my relationships. I don't ever want to do this again, so I ask You to help me walk in truthfulness, integrity, and in genuine agape love, in Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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Leonard Ravenhill

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1 AND DAVID said, Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake? 2 And of the house of Saul there was a servant whose name was Ziba. When they had called him to David, he said to him, Are you Ziba? He said, I, your servant, am he. 3 The king said, Is there not still someone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the [unfailing, unsought, unlimited] mercy and kindness of God? Ziba replied, Jonathan has yet a son who is lame in his feet. 4 And the king said, Where is he? Ziba replied, He is in the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar. 5 Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir son of Ammiel at Lo-debar. 6 And Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and did obeisance. David said, Mephibosheth! And he answered, Behold your servant! 7 David said to him, Fear not, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your father [grandfather], and you shall eat at my table always. 8 And [the cripple] bowed himself and said, What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I am? 9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, I have given your master's son [grandson] all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. 10 And you shall till the land for him, you, your sons, and your servants, and you shall bring in the produce, that your master's heir may have food to eat; but Mephibosheth, your master's son [grandson], shall eat always at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. 11 Then Ziba said to the king, Your servant will do according to all my lord the king commands. So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons. 12 Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micha. And all who dwelt in Ziba's house were servants to Mephibosheth. 13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table, [even though] he was lame in both feet.

Chapter 9

In chapter nine David sought to discover if there were any left from the house of Saul. Jonathan and David had made a friendship pact between them that they would do good, and show kindness unto each other, and to each other's descendants forever. So now that David is established, he seeks to find out if there are any left from Saul's house that he might honor, and they might keep this pact that he had made with Jonathan. He was told concerning Jonathan's son Mephibosheth. Now Mephibosheth was only five years old when his father Jonathan was killed in battle with his grandfather Saul, when they battled against the Philistines at Mount Gilboa. When his nurse heard that the Philistines had taken Jonathan, Saul in battle, she was fearful. She grabbed this little five year old son of Jonathan's, Mephibosheth, and sought to flee. As she did, she dropped him and broke both of his legs. Not being set properly, he became a cripple.

And so it was told David that Mephibosheth was yet alive. So David called to have Mephibosheth brought into him. And when Mephibosheth came in he bowed down, and did obeisance to David. David said, Don't be afraid, I want to actually honor you seeing I made this pact with Jonathan. And he said, I want to restore to you all that belonged to the house of Saul, all of the properties, the houses and the vineyards, and every thing that belonged to the family. I want to restore them to you. And you are to eat meat at my table from now on (2Sa 9:3-10).

He was to become a part of the entourage that ate with the king. So David showed great kindness for Jonathan's sake, and for the vows and all that he had made with Jonathan.

Then David took one of the servants and he made this servant and his family the servants of Mephibosheth, and Ziba with his fifteen sons and twenty servants [were given the orders to take care of his crops and to bring in the harvest, and to just watch over all that belonged to him.] (2Sa 9:10).

So David showed unto Mephibosheth great honor, and was extremely gracious unto him.

THE INCREASE OF FAITH

HOW CAN WE OBTAIN an increase of faith? This is a very earnest question to many. They say they want to believe, but cannot. A great deal of nonsense is talked upon this subject. Let us be strictly practical in our dealing with it. Common sense is as much needed in religion as anywhere else. "What am I to do in order to believe?" One who was asked the best way to do a certain simple act, replied that the best way to do it was to do it at once. We waste time in discussing methods when the action is simple. The shortest way to believe is to believe. If the Holy Spirit has made you candid, you will believe as soon as truth is set before you. You will believe it because it is true. The gospel command is clear; "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It is idle to evade this by questions and quibbles. The order is plain; let it be obeyed.

But still, if you have difficulty, take it before God in prayer. Tell the great Father exactly what it is that puzzles you, and beg Him by His Holy Spirit to solve the question. If I cannot believe a statement in a book, I am glad to inquire of the author what he means by it; and if he is a true man his explanation will satisfy me; much more will the divine explanation of the hard points of Scripture satisfy the heart of the true seeker. The Lord is willing to make himself known; go to Him and see if it is not so. Repair at once to your closet, and cry, "O Holy Spirit, lead me into the truth! What I know not, teach Thou me."

Furthermore, if faith seems difficult, it is possible that God the Holy Spirit will enable you to believe if you hear very frequently and earnestly that which you are commanded to believe. We believe many things because we have heard them so often. Do you not find it so in common life, that if you hear a thing fifty times a day, at last you come to believe it? Some men have come to believe very unlikely statements by this process, and therefore I do not wonder that the good Spirit often blesses the method of often hearing the truth, and uses it to work faith concerning that which is to be believed. It is written, "Faith cometh by hearing"; therefore hear often. If I earnestly and attentively hear the gospel, one of these days I shall find myself believing that which I hear, through the blessed operation of the Spirit of God upon my mind. Only mind you hear the gospel, and do not distract your mind with either hearing or reading that which is designed to stagger you.

If that, however, should seem poor advice, I would add next, consider the testimony of others. The Samaritans believed because of what the woman told them concerning Jesus. Many of our beliefs arise out of the testimony of others. I believe that there is such a country as Japan; I never saw it, and yet I believe that there is such a place because others have been there. I believe that I shall die; I have never died, but a great many have done so whom I once knew, and therefore I have a conviction that I shall die also. The testimony of many convinces me of that fact. Listen, then, to those who tell you how they were saved, how they were pardoned, how they were changed in character. If you will look into the matter you will find that somebody just like yourself has been saved. If you have been a thief, you will find that a thief rejoiced to wash away his sin in the fountain of Christ's blood. If unhappily you have been unchaste, you will find that men and women who have fallen in that way have been cleansed and changed. If you are in despair, you have only to get among God's people, and inquire a little, and you will discover that some of the saints have been equally in despair at times and they will be pleased to tell you how the Lord delivered them. As you listen to one after another of those who have tried the word of God, and proved it, the divine Spirit will lead you to believe. Have you not heard of the African who was told by the missionary that water sometimes became so hard that a man could walk on it? He declared that he believed a great many things the missionary had told him; but he would never believe that. When he came to England it came to pass that one frosty day he saw the river frozen, but he would not venture on it. He knew that it was a deep river, and he felt certain that he would be drowned if he ventured upon it. He could not be induced to walk the frozen water till his friend and many others went upon it; then he was persuaded, and trusted himself where others had safely ventured. So, while you see others believe in the Lamb of God, and notice their joy and peace, you will yourself be gently led to believe. The experience of others is one of God's ways of helping us to faith. You have either to believe in Jesus or die; there is no hope for you but in Him.

A better plan is this--note the authority upon which you are commanded to believe, and this will greatly help you to faith. The authority is not mine, or you might well reject it. But you are commanded to believe upon the authority of God himself. He bids you believe in Jesus Christ, and you must not refuse to obey your Maker. The foreman of a certain works had often heard the gospel, but he was troubled with the fear that he might not come to Christ. His good master one day sent a card around to the works--"Come to my house immediately after work." The foreman appeared at his master's door, and the master came out, and said somewhat roughly, "What do you want, John, troubling me at this time? Work is done, what right have you here?" "Sir," said he, "I had a card from you saying that I was to come after work." "Do you mean to say that merely because you had a card from me you are to come up to my house and call me out after business hours?" "Well, Sir," replied the foreman, "I do not understand you, but it seems to me that, as you sent for me, I had a right to come." "Come in, John," said his master, "I have another message that I want to read to you," and he sat down and read these words: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Do you think after such a message from Christ that you can be wrong in coming to him?" The poor man saw it all at once, and believed in the Lord Jesus unto eternal life, because he perceived that he had good warrant and authority for believing. So have you, poor soul! You have good authority for coming to Christ, for the Lord himself bids you trust Him.

If that does not breed faith in you, think over what it is that you have to believe--that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered in the place and stead of sinners, and is able to save all who trust Him. Why, this is the most blessed fact that ever men were told to believe; the most suitable, the most comforting, the most divine truth that was ever set before mortal minds. I advise you to think much upon it, and search out the grace and love which it contains. Study the four Evangelists, study Paul's epistles, and then see if the message is not such a credible one that you are forced to believe it.

If that does not do, then think upon the person of Jesus Christ--think of who He is, and what He did, and where He is, and what He is. How can you doubt Him? It is cruelty to distrust the ever truthful Jesus. He has done nothing to deserve distrust; on the contrary, it should be easy to rely upon Him. Why crucify Him anew by unbelief? Is not this crowning Him with thorns again, and spitting upon Him again? What! is He not to be trusted? What worse insult did the soldiers pour upon Him than this? They made Him a martyr; but you make Him a liar--this is worse by far. Do not ask how can I believe? But answer another question--How can you disbelieve?

If none of these things avail, then there is something wrong about you altogether, and my last word is, submit yourself to God! Prejudice or pride is at the bottom of this unbelief. May the Spirit of God take away your enmity and make you yield. You are a rebel, a proud rebel, and that is why you do not believe your God. Give up your rebellion; throw down your weapons; yield at discretion, surrender to your King. I believe that never did a soul throw up its hands in self-despair, and cry, "Lord, I yield," but what faith became easy to it before long. It is because you still have a quarrel with God, and resolve to have your own will and your own way, that therefore you cannot believe. "How can ye believe," said Christ, "that have honor one of another?" Proud self creates unbelief. Submit, O man. Yield to your God, and then shall you sweetly believe in your Saviour. May the Holy Ghost now work secretly but effectually with you, and bring you at this very moment to believe in the Lord Jesus! Amen.

REGENERATION AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." This word of our Lord Jesus has appeared to flame in the way of many, like the drawn sword of the cherub at the gate of Paradise. They have despaired, because this change is beyond their utmost effort. The new birth is from above, and therefore it is not in the creature's power. Now, it is far from my mind to deny, or ever to conceal, a truth in order to create a false comfort. I freely admit that the new birth is supernatural, and that it cannot be wrought by the sinner's own self. It would be a poor help to my reader if I were wicked enough to try to cheer him by persuading him to reject or forget what is unquestionably true.

But is it not remarkable that the very chapter in which our Lord makes this sweeping declaration also contains the most explicit statement as to salvation by faith? Read the third chapter of John's Gospel and do not dwell alone upon its earlier sentences. It is true that the third verse says:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

But, then, the fourteenth and fifteenth verses speak:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The eighteenth verse repeats the same doctrine in the broadest terms:

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

It is clear to every reader that these two statements must agree, since they came from the same lips, and are recorded on the same inspired page. Why should we make a difficulty where there can be none? If one statement assures us of the necessity to salvation of a something, which only God can give, and if another assures us that the Lord will save us upon our believing in Jesus, then we may safely conclude that the Lord will give to those who believe all that is declared to be necessary to salvation. The Lord does, in fact, produce the new birth in all who believe in Jesus; and their believing is the surest evidence that they are born again.

We trust in Jesus for what we cannot do ourselves: if it were in our own power, what need of looking to Him? It is ours to believe, it is the Lord's to create us anew. He will not believe for us, neither are we to do regenerating work for Him. It is enough for us to obey the gracious command; it is for the Lord to work the new birth in us. He who could go so far as to die on the cross for us, can and will give us all things that are needful for our eternal safety.

"But a saving change of heart is the work of the Holy Spirit." This also is most true, and let it be far from us to question it, or to forget it. But the work of the Holy Spirit is secret and mysterious, and it can only be perceived by its results. There are mysteries about our natural birth into which it would be an unhallowed curiosity to pry: still more is this the case with the sacred operations of the Spirit of God. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This much, however, we do know--the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit cannot be a reason for refusing to believe in Jesus to whom that same Spirit beareth witness.

If a man were bidden to sow a field, he could not excuse his neglect by saying that it would be useless to sow unless God caused the seed to grow. He would not be justified in neglecting tillage because the secret energy of God alone can create a harvest. No one is hindered in the ordinary pursuits of life by the fact that unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it. It is certain that no man who believes in Jesus will ever find that the Holy Spirit refuses to work in him: in fact, his believing is the proof that the Spirit is already at work in his heart.

God works in providence, but men do not therefore sit still. They could not move without the divine power giving them life and strength, and yet they proceed upon their way without question; the power being bestowed from day to day by Him in whose hand their breath is,

and whose are all their ways. So is it in grace. We repent and believe, though we could do neither if the Lord did not enable us. We forsake sin and trust in Jesus, and then we perceive that the Lord has wrought in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. It is idle to pretend that there is any real difficulty in the matter.

Some truths which it is hard to explain in words are simple enough in actual experience. There is no discrepancy between the truth that the sinner believes, and that his faith is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. Only folly can lead men to puzzle themselves about plain matters while their souls are in danger. No man would refuse to enter a lifeboat because he did not know the specific gravity of bodies; neither would a starving man decline to eat till he understood the whole process of nutrition. If you, my reader, will not believe till you can understand all mysteries, you will never be saved at all; and if you allow self-invented difficulties to keep you from accepting pardon through your Lord and Saviour, you will perish in a condemnation which will be richly deserved. Do not commit spiritual suicide through a passion for discussing metaphysical subtleties.

"MY REDEEMER LIVETH"

CONTINUALLY have I spoken to the reader concerning Christ crucified, who is the great hope of the guilty; but it is our wisdom to remember that our Lord has risen from the dead and lives eternally.

You are not asked to trust in a dead Jesus, but in One who, though He died for our sins, has risen again for our justification. You may go to Jesus at once as to a living and present friend. He is not a mere memory, but a continually existent Person who will hear your prayers and answer them. He lives on purpose to carry on the work for which He once laid down His life. He is interceding for sinners at the right hand of the Father, and for this reason He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him. Come and try this living Saviour, if you have never done so before.

This living Jesus is also raised to an eminence of glory and power. He does not now sorrow as "a humble man before his foes," nor labor as "the carpenter's son"; but He is exalted far above principalities and power and every name that is named. The Father has given Him all power in Heaven and in earth, and he exercises this high endowment in carrying out His work of grace. Hear what Peter and the other apostles testified concerning Him before the high priest and the council:

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:30, 31).

The glory which surrounds the ascended Lord should breathe hope into every believer's breast. Jesus is no mean person--He is "a Saviour and a great one." He is the crowned and enthroned Redeemer of men. The sovereign prerogative of life and death is vested in Him; the Father has put all men under the mediatorial government of the Son, so that He can quicken whom He will. He openeth, and no man shutteth. At His word the soul which is bound by the cords of sin and condemnation can be unloosed in a moment. He stretches out the silver scepter, and whosoever touches it lives.

It is well for us that as sin lives, and the flesh lives, and the devil lives, so Jesus lives; and it is also well that whatever might these may have to ruin us, Jesus has still greater power to save us.

All His exaltation and ability are on our account. "He is exalted to be," and exalted "to give." He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, that He may give all that is needed to accomplish the salvation of all who come under His rule. Jesus has nothing which He will not use for a sinner's salvation, and He is nothing which He will not display in the aboundings of His grace. He links His princedom with His Saviour-ship, as if He would not have the one without the other; and He sets forth His exaltation as designed to bring blessings to men, as if this were the flower and crown of His glory. Could anything be more calculated to raise the hopes of seeking sinners who are looking Christward?

Jesus endured great humiliation, and therefore there was room for Him to be exalted. By that humiliation He accomplished and endured all the Father's will, and therefore He was rewarded by being raised to glory. He uses that exaltation on behalf of His people. Let my reader raise his eyes to these hills of glory, whence his help must come. Let him contemplate the high glories of the Prince and Saviour. Is it not most hopeful for men that a Man is now on the throne of the universe? Is it not glorious that the Lord of all is the Saviour of sinners? We have a Friend at court; yea, a Friend on the throne. He will use all His influence for those who entrust their affairs in His hands. Well does one of our poets sing:

He ever lives to intercede

Before His Father's face;

Give Him, my soul, Thy cause to plead,

No doubt the Father's grace.

Come, friend, and commit your cause and your case to those once pierced hands, which are now glorified with the signet rings of royal power and honor. No suit ever failed which was left with this great Advocate.

REPENTANCE MUST GO WITH FORGIVENESS

IT IS CLEAR from the text which we have lately quoted that repentance is bound up with the forgiveness of sins. In Acts 5:31 we read that Jesus is "exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins." These two blessings come from that sacred hand which once was nailed to the tree, but is now raised to glory. Repentance and forgiveness are riveted together by the eternal purpose of God. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Repentance must go with remission, and you will see that it is so if you think a little upon the matter. It cannot be that pardon of sin should be given to an impenitent sinner; this were to confirm him in his evil ways, and to teach him to think little of evil. If the Lord were to say, "You love sin, and live in it, and you are going on from bad to worse, but, all the same, I forgive you," this were to proclaim a horrible license for iniquity. The foundations of social order would be removed, and moral anarchy would follow. I cannot tell what innumerable mischiefs would certainly occur if you could divide repentance and forgiveness, and pass by the sin while the sinner remained as fond of it as ever. In the very nature of things, if we believe in the holiness of God, it must be so, that if we continue in our sin, and will not repent of it, we cannot be forgiven, but must reap the consequence of our obstinacy. According to the infinite goodness of God, we are promised that if we will forsake our sins, confessing them, and will, by faith, accept the grace which is provided in Christ Jesus, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But, so long as God lives, there can be no promise of mercy to those who continue in their evil ways, and refuse to acknowledge their wrongdoing. Surely no rebel can expect the King to pardon his treason while he remains in open revolt. No one can be so foolish as to imagine that the Judge of all the earth will put away our sins if we refuse to put them away ourselves.

Moreover, it must be so for the completeness of divine mercy. That mercy which could forgive the sin and yet let the sinner live in it would be scant and superficial mercy. It would be unequal and deformed mercy, lame upon one of its feet, and withered as to one of its hands. Which, think you, is the greater privilege, cleansing from the guilt of sin, or deliverance from the power of sin? I will not attempt to weigh in the scales two mercies so surpassing. Neither of them could have come to us apart from the precious blood of Jesus. But it seems to me that to be delivered from the dominion of sin, to be made holy, to be made like to God, must be reckoned the greater of the two, if a comparison has to be drawn. To be forgiven is an immeasurable favor. We make this one of the first notes of our psalm of praise: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." But if we could be forgiven, and then could be permitted to love sin, to riot in iniquity, and to wallow in lust, what would be the use of such a forgiveness? Might it not turn out to be a poisoned sweet, which would most effectually destroy us? To be washed, and yet to lie in the mire; to be pronounced clean, and yet to have the leprosy white on one's brow, would be the veriest mockery of mercy. What is it to bring the man out of his sepulcher if you leave him dead? Why lead him into the light if he is still blind? We thank God, that He who forgives our iniquities also heals our diseases. He who washes us from the stains of the past also uplifts us from the foul ways of the present, and keeps us from failing in the future. We must joyfully accept both repentance and remission; they cannot be separated. The covenant heritage is one and indivisible, and must not be parceled out. To divide the work of grace would be to cut the living child in halves, and those who would permit this have no interest in it.

I will ask you who are seeking the Lord, whether you would be satisfied with one of these mercies alone? Would it content you, my reader, if God would forgive you your sin and then allow you to be as worldly and wicked as before? Oh, no! The quickened spirit is more afraid of sin itself than of the penal results of it. The cry of your heart is not, "Who shall deliver me from punishment?" but, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Who shall enable me to live above temptation, and to become holy, even as God is holy?" Since the unity of repentance with remission agrees with gracious desire, and since it is necessary for the completeness of salvation, and for holiness' sake, rest you sure that it abides.

Repentance and forgiveness are joined together in the experience of all believers. There never was a person yet who did unfeignedly repent of sin with believing repentance who was not forgiven; and on the other hand, there never was a person forgiven who had not repented of his sin. I do not hesitate to say that beneath the copes of Heaven there never was, there is not, and there never will be, any case of sin being washed away, unless at the same time the heart was led to repentance and faith in Christ. Hatred of sin and a sense of pardon come together into the soul, and abide together while we live.

These two things act and react upon each other: the man who is forgiven, therefore repents; and the man who repents is also most assuredly forgiven. Remember first, that forgiveness leads to repentance. As we sing in Hart's words:

Law and terrors do but harden,

All the while they work alone;

But a sense of blood-bought pardon

Soon dissolves a heart of stone.

When we are sure that we are forgiven, then we abhor iniquity; and I suppose that when faith grows into full assurance, so that we are certain beyond a doubt that the blood of Jesus has washed us whiter than snow, it is then that repentance reaches to its greatest height. Repentance grows as faith grows. Do not make any mistake about it; repentance is not a thing of days and weeks, a temporary penance to be over as fast as possible! No; it is the grace of a lifetime, like faith itself. God's little children repent, and so do the young men and the fathers. Repentance is the inseparable companion of faith. All the while that we walk by faith and not by sight, the tear of repentance glitters in the eye of faith. That is not true repentance which does not come of faith in Jesus, and that is not true faith in Jesus which is not tintured with repentance. Faith and repentance, like Siamese twins, are vitally joined together. In proportion as we believe in the

forgiving love of Christ, in that proportion we repent; and in proportion as we repent of sin and hate evil, we rejoice in the fullness of the absolution which Jesus is exalted to bestow. You will never value pardon unless you feel repentance; and you will never taste the deepest draught of repentance until you know that you are pardoned. It may seem a strange thing, but so it is--the bitterness of repentance and the sweetness of pardon blend in the flavor of every gracious life, and make up an incomparable happiness.

These two covenant gifts are the mutual assurance of each other. If I know that I repent, I know that I am forgiven. How am I to know that I am forgiven except I know also that I am turned from my former sinful course? To be a believer is to be a penitent. Faith and repentance are but two spokes in the same wheel, two handles of the same plough. Repentance has been well described as a heart broken for sin, and from sin; and it may equally well be spoken of as turning and returning. It is a change of mind of the most thorough and radical sort, and it is attended with sorrow for the past, and a resolve of amendment in the future.

Repentance is to leave

The sins we loved before;

And show that we in earnest grieve,

By doing so no more.

Now, when that is the case, we may be certain that we are forgiven; for the Lord never made a heart to be broken for sin and broken from sin, without pardoning it. If, on the other hand, we are enjoying pardon, through the blood of Jesus, and are justified by faith, and have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we know that our repentance and faith are of the right sort.

Do not regard your repentance as the cause of your remission, but as the companion of it. Do not expect to be able to repent until you see the grace of our Lord Jesus, and His readiness to blot out your sin. Keep these blessed things in their places, and view them in their relation to each other. They are the Jachin and Boaz of a saving experience; I mean that they are comparable to Solomon's two great pillars which stood in the forefront of the house of the Lord, and formed a majestic entrance to the holy place. No man comes to God aright except he passes between the pillars of repentance and remission. Upon your heart the rainbow of covenant grace has been displayed in all its beauty when the tear-drops of repentance have been shone upon by the light of full forgiveness. Repentance of sin and faith in divine pardon are the warp and woof of the fabric of real conversion. By these tokens shall you know an Israelite indeed.

To come back to the Scripture upon which we are meditating: both forgiveness and repentance flow from the same source, and are given by the same Saviour. The Lord Jesus in His glory bestows both upon the same persons. You are neither to find the remission nor the repentance elsewhere. Jesus has both ready, and He is prepared to bestow them now, and to bestow them most freely on all who will accept them at His hands. Let it never be forgotten that Jesus gives all that is needful for our salvation. It is highly important that all seekers after mercy should remember this. Faith is as much the gift of God as is the Saviour upon whom that faith relies. Repentance of sin is as truly the work of grace as the making of an atonement by which sin is blotted out. Salvation, from first to last, is of grace alone. You will not misunderstand me. It is not the Holy Spirit who repents. He has never done anything for which He should repent. If He could repent, it would not meet the case; we must ourselves repent of our own sin, or we are not saved from its power. It is not the Lord Jesus Christ who repents. What should He repent of? We ourselves repent with the full consent of every faculty of our mind. The will, the affections, the emotions, all work together most heartily in the blessed act of repentance for sin; and yet at the back of all that is our personal act, there is a secret holy influence which melts the heart, gives contrition, and produces a complete change. The Spirit of God enlightens us to see what sin is, and thus makes it loathsome in our eyes. The Spirit of God also turns us toward holiness, makes us heartily to appreciate, love, and desire it, and thus gives us the impetus by which we are led onward from stage to stage of sanctification. The Spirit of God works in us to will and to do according to God's good pleasure. To that good Spirit let us submit ourselves at once, that He may lead us to Jesus, who will freely give us the double benediction of repentance and remission, according to the riches of His grace. "BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED."

HOW REPENTANCE IS GIVEN

TO RETURN to the grand text: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Our Lord Jesus Christ has gone up that grace may come down. His glory is employed to give greater currency to His grace. The Lord has not taken a step upward except with the design of bearing believing sinners upward with Him. He is exalted to give repentance; and this we shall see if we remember a few great truths.

The work which our Lord Jesus has done has made repentance possible, available, and acceptable. The law makes no mention of repentance, but says plainly, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If the Lord Jesus had not died and risen again and gone unto the Father, what would your repenting or mine be worth? We might feel remorse with its horrors, but never repentance with its hopes. Repentance, as a natural feeling, is a common duty deserving no great praise: indeed, it is so generally mingled with a selfish fear of punishment, that the kindest estimate makes but little of it. Had not Jesus interposed and wrought out a wealth of merit, our tears of repentance would have been so much water spilled upon the ground. Jesus is exalted on high, that through the virtue of His intercession repentance may have a place before God. In this respect He gives us repentance, because He puts repentance into a position of acceptance, which otherwise it could never have occupied.

When Jesus was exalted on high, the Spirit of God was poured out to work in us all needful graces. The Holy Ghost creates repentance in us by supernaturally renewing our nature, and taking away the heart of stone out of our flesh. Oh, sit not down straining those eyes of yours to fetch out impossible tears! Repentance comes not from unwilling nature, but from free and sovereign grace. Get not to your

chamber to smite your breast in order to fetch from a heart of stone feelings which are not there. But go to Calvary and see how Jesus died. Look upward to the hills whence comes your help. The Holy Ghost has come on purpose that He may overshadow men's spirits and breed repentance within them, even as once He brooded over chaos and brought forth order. Breathe your prayer to Him, "Blessed Spirit, dwell with me. Make me tender and lowly of heart, that I may hate sin and unfeignedly repent of it." He will hear your cry and answer you. Remember, too, that when our Lord Jesus was exalted, He not only gave us repentance by sending forth the Holy Spirit, but by consecrating all the works of nature and of providence to the great ends of our salvation, so that any one of them may call us to repentance, whether it crow like Peter's cock, or shake the prison like the jailer's earthquake. From the right hand of God our Lord Jesus rules all things here below, and makes them work together for the salvation of His redeemed. He uses both bitters and sweets, trials and joys, that He may produce in sinners a better mind toward their God. Be thankful for the providence which has made you poor, or sick, or sad; for by all this Jesus works the life of your spirit and turns you to Himself. The Lord's mercy often rides the door of our hearts on the black horse of affliction. Jesus uses the whole range of our experience to wean us from earth and woo us to Heaven. Christ is exalted to the throne of Heaven and earth in order that, by all the processes of His providence, He may subdue hard hearts unto the gracious softening of repentance.

Besides, He is at work at this hour by all His whispers in the conscience, by His inspired Book, by those of us who speak out of that Book, and by praying friends and earnest hearts. He can send a word to you which shall strike your rocky heart as with the rod of Moses, and cause streams of repentance to flow forth. He can bring to your mind some heart-breaking text out of Holy Scripture which shall conquer you right speedily. He can mysteriously soften you, and cause a holy frame of mind to steal over you when you least look for it. Be sure of this, that He who is gone into His glory, raised into all the splendor and majesty of God, has abundant ways of working repentance in those to whom He grants forgiveness. He is even now waiting to give repentance to you. Ask Him for it at once.

Observe with much comfort that the Lord Jesus Christ gives this repentance to the most unlikely people in the world. He is exalted to give repentance to Israel. To Israel! In the days when the apostles thus spoke, Israel was the nation which had most grossly sinned against light and love, by daring to say, "His blood be on us and on our children." Yet Jesus is exalted to give them repentance! What a marvel of grace! If you have been brought up in the brightest of Christian light, and yet have rejected it, there is still hope. If you have sinned against conscience, and against the Holy Spirit, and against the love of Jesus, there is yet space for repentance. Though you may be as hard as unbelieving Israel of old, softening may yet come to you, since Jesus is exalted, and clothed with boundless power. For those who went the furthest in iniquity, and sinned with special aggravation, the Lord Jesus is exalted to give to them repentance and forgiveness of sins. Happy am I to have so full a gospel to proclaim! Happy are you to be allowed to read it!

The hearts of the children of Israel had grown hard as an adamant stone. Luther used to think it impossible to convert a Jew. We are far from agreeing with him, and yet we must admit that the seed of Israel have been exceedingly obstinate in their rejection of the Saviour during these many centuries. Truly did the Lord say, "Israel would none of me." "He came to his own and his own received him not." Yet on behalf of Israel our Lord Jesus is exalted for the giving of repentance and remission. Probably my reader is a Gentile; but yet he may have a very stubborn heart, which has stood out against the Lord Jesus for many years; and yet in him our Lord can work repentance. It may be that you will yet feel compelled to write as William Hone did when he yielded to divine love. He was the author of those most entertaining volumes called the "Everyday Book," but he was once a stout-hearted infidel. When subdued by sovereign grace, he wrote: The proudest heart that ever beat Hath been subdued in me; The wildest will that ever rose; To scorn Thy cause and aid Thy foes, Is quell'd my Lord, by Thee. Thy will, and not my will be done, My heart be ever Thine; Confessing Thee the mighty Word, My Saviour Christ, my God, my Lord, Thy cross shall be my sign.

The Lord can give repentance to the most unlikely, turning lions into lambs, and ravens into doves. Let us look to Him that this great change may be wrought in us. Assuredly the contemplation of the death of Christ is one of the surest and speediest methods of gaining repentance. Do not sit down and try to pump up repentance from the dry well of corrupt nature. It is contrary to the laws of mind to suppose that you can force your soul into that gracious state. Take your heart in prayer to Him who understands it, and say, "Lord, cleanse it. Lord, renew it. Lord, work repentance in it." The more you try to produce penitent emotions in yourself, the more you will be disappointed; but if you believingly think of Jesus dying for you, repentance will burst forth. Meditate on the Lord's shedding His heart's blood out of love to you. Set before your mind's eye the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion; and, as you do this, He who was the bearer of all this grief will look at you, and with that look He will do for you what He did for Peter, so that you also will go out and weep bitterly. He who died for you can, by His gracious Spirit, make you die to sin; and He who has gone into glory on your behalf can draw your soul after Him, away from evil, and toward holiness. I shall be content if I leave this one thought with you; look not beneath the ice to find fire, neither hope in your own natural heart to find repentance. Look to the Living One for life. Look to Jesus for all you need between Hell Gate and Heaven Gate. Never seek elsewhere for any part of that which Jesus loves to bestow; but remember, Christ is all.

"ALL of GRACE" An Earnest Word with Those Who Are Seeking Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ By; C.H. SPURGEON; (19 June 1834 – 31 January 1892) was a British Particular Baptist preacher. Spurgeon remains highly influential among Christians of different denominations, among whom he is known as the "Prince of Preachers". He was a strong figure in the Reformed Baptist tradition, defending the Church in agreement with the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith understanding, and opposing the liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the Church of his day.

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 424-426)

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