

Matt. 27:1-10: When morning came, all the chief priests & the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. ² And they bound him & led him away & delivered him over to Pilate the governor. ³ Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind & brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests & the elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵ & throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, & he went and hanged himself. ⁶ But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷ So they took counsel & bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. ⁸ Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "& they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ & they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

Intro: Last Sunday, we saw the most terrible denial of the greatest Man Who has ever lived by one of His closest disciples: Peter's denial of the LORD Jesus Christ. This was one of the greatest sins ever committed in the history of the world! Yet, because of this, we also saw the greatest mercy ever shown in the history of the world! & this mercy is for you! Behold the great sin of Peter! Behold the great mercy of Christ! So hope in His mercy!

Today, we're going to focus on Judas' false repentance, & think more deeply about the nature of true repentance. Peter truly repented! But not Judas. Peter fled to Christ! Jesus never had to repent, but instead was sent, God's wrath on Christ was spent, to death He went, then rose alive content, so that now, by His mercy, you can truly repent!

1. Men Hate God

Matt. 27:1-2: When morning came, all the chief priests & the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. ² And they bound him & led him away & delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

a. The religious leaders of Israel wickedly planned to kill their only hope of salvation: And yet through their wicked planning & murder of the Son of God, salvation comes to God's people! What they meant for evil, God meant for good! But here again, we see the sinful wickedness & utter evil of men! All men are all born this way:

- **Rom. 3:23:** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

- **Rom. 3:10-18:** as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." ¹³ "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." ¹⁴ "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, ¹⁷ & the way of peace they have not known." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

- **Rom. 8:7-8:** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- **Rom. 1:30:** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil **GOSPEL!**

b. Jesus is a real, historical man: Notice Jesus was bound, led away, & delivered over to Pilate the governor. Liberal christianity, which is not Christianity at all, uses Bible language, but guts the Bible of its true meaning.

- **Apostles' Creed:** I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit & born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, & was buried.

Jesus never had to repent, but instead was sent, God's wrath on Christ was spent, to death He went, then rose alive content, so that now, by His mercy, you can truly repent!

2. Repentance Can Be False

Matt. 27:3-5: Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind & brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests & the elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵ & throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, & he went and hanged himself.

a. It seems like Judas repented: 1) Judas saw Jesus get condemned in the kangaroo (unjust) court; 2) Judas changed his mind! [**Matt. 21:28-29:** What do you think? A man had two sons. & he went to the first & said, "Son, go & work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not," but afterward he changed his mind & went]; 3) Judas took action: he brought the money back; 4) Judas confessed his sins: "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood"

b. The chief priests & elders had no mercy on Judas: V. 4: "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." [That is your responsibility!]

- **Matt. 27:24:** (Pilate) I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.

"What is that to us?" They should have cared about justice! God hates injustice! They should repent!: **Prov. 17:15:** He who justifies the wicked & he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD.

"That is your responsibility" What should these leaders do if a man confesses his sins to them? Offer mercy found only in the true God of Israel! But they don't know the true God of Israel! They're going to kill the God-Man!

c. There is a repentance that leads to death: Judas did not truly, genuinely repent. How do we know this?

1) Judas killed himself; 2) Jesus pronounced a woe of judgment on Judas, called him unclean, said he was lost, & called him "the son of destruction":

- **Matt. 26:24:** The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

- **Jn. 13:11:** For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, "Not all of you are clean."

- **Jn. 17:12:** I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Jesus never had to repent, but instead was sent, God's wrath on Christ was spent, to death He went, then rose alive content, so that now, by His mercy, you can truly repent!

3. What Is True Repentance And What Is False Repentance?

a. WLC 76 Q. What is repentance unto life?: A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit & Word of God, whereby out of the sight & sense, not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness & odiousness of his sins, & upon the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, he so grieves for & hates his sins, as that he turns from them all to God, purposing & endeavouring constantly to walk with Him in all the ways of new obedience.

- **WCF 15.3:** Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.

- **WCF 15.4:** As there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.

- **WCF 15.5:** Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavour to repent of his particular sins particularly.

- **WCF 15.6:** As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy; so he that scandalizeth his brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended; who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.

- **Martin Luther:** The whole Christian life is a life of repentance.

b. Repentance is a gift from God: 2 Tim. 2:25: God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.

- **Acts 11:18:** [Peter reported to the church in Jerusalem]: When they heard these things they fell silent. & they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

c. Characteristics of false repentance: Jim Elliff: (The Unrepenting Repenter): 1) You may reform in the actions without repenting in the heart: This is a great deception, for the love of sin remains. At this the Pharisees were experts. The heart of a man is his problem. A man may appear perfect in his actions but be damned for his heart. His actions are at best self-serving & hypocritical. What comes from a bad heart is never good. **Jas. 3:11-12:** Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water & fresh.

2) You may experience the emotion of repentance without the effect of it. You see the awful specter of sin in the mirror & flinch out of horror yet immediately forget what kind of person you saw. It is true, repentance includes sincere emotion, an affection for God & a disaffection for sin. Torrents of sorrow may flood the repenter's heart, & properly so (Jas. 4:8-10). But there is such a thing as a temporary emotion in the mere semblance of repentance; this emotion has very weak legs & cannot carry the behavior in the long walk of obedience. Your sorrow may even be prolonged. Yet if it does not arrive at repentance, it is of the world & is a living death—and maybe more (2 Cor. 7:10). It is an old deceiver. Judas had such remorse but “went and hanged himself.”

2 Cor. 7:9-11: As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.¹⁰ For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.¹¹ For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

3) You may confess the words of a true repenter & never repent: Confession by itself is not repentance. Confession moves the lips; repentance moves the heart. Naming an act as evil before God is not the same as leaving it. Though your confession may be honest & emotional, it is not enough unless it expresses a true change of heart. There are those who confess only for the show of it, whose so-called repentance may be theatrical but not actual. If you express repentance to appear successful, you will not be successful at repenting. You will speak humbly but sin arrogantly. Saul gave the model confession (1 Sam. 15:24-26) & later went to hell. Repentance “from the teeth out” is no repentance.

4) You may repent for the fear of punishment alone & not for the hatred of sin: Any man will stop sinning when caught or relatively sure he will be, unless there is insufficient punishment or shame attached. When there are losses great enough to get his attention, he will reform. If this is the entire motive of his repentance, he has not repented at all. It is the work of law, but not grace. Men can be controlled by fear, but what is required is a change of heart. Achan admitted his sin after being caught but would not have otherwise. Find his bones in the valley of Achor; his soul, most likely, in hell.

5) You may talk against sin in public like a true repenter but never repent in private: The exercise of the mouth cannot change the heart. Your sin is like a prostitute. You are speaking against your lover in public but embracing her in the bedroom. She is not particular about being run down in public if she can have your full attention in private.

6) You may repent primarily for temporal gains rather than the glory of God: There are gains for the repenter, but the final motivation for repenting cannot be selfish. Self is a dead, stinking carcass to be discarded. We are to repent because God is worthy & is our respected authority, even if we gain nothing. Indeed, our repenting may appear to lose us more than our sin had gained. (Phil. 3:7-8) And this is a test of true repentance.

7) You may repent of lesser sins for the purpose of avoiding the greater sins: We try to salve our nagging conscience by some minor exercise of repentance, which is really no repentance at all. The whole heart is changed in the believer. The half repenter is a divided man: part against sin & part for it; part against Christ, part for Him. But one or the other must win out, for man cannot serve God and mammon (or any other idol); he must love the one & hate the other.

8) You may repent so generally that you never repent of any specific sin at all: The man who repents in too great a generality is likely covering his sins. If there are no particular changes, there is no repenting. Sin has many heads, like the mythological Hydra. It cannot be dealt with in general, but its heads must be cut off one by one.

9) You may repent for the love of friends & religious leaders & not repent for the love of God: A man talked into repentance may reform for the love of friends or the respect of the spiritually minded, yet do nothing substantial. If a man turns from sin without turning to God, he will find his sin has only changed its name & is hidden behind his pride. Now it will be harder to root out because of deceit. You have loved others but not God. And you have loved yourself most of all. Lot's wife left the city of sin at the insistence of an angel & for the love of her family, but turned back. She had left her heart. "Remember Lot's wife." (Gen. 19:12-26; Lk. 17:32)

10) You may confess the finished action of sin & not repent from the continuing habit of sin: A man is not a repenting man until the sin is stabbed to death. He must be a murderer if he would be God's: "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Rom. 8:13) God knows what you have done; what He wants is obedience. (Lk. 6:46)

11) You may attempt repentance of your sin while consciously leaving open the door of its opportunity: A man who says "I repent" but will not leave the source or environment of that sin is suspect. Though some situations which invite temptation cannot be changed, most can. A man who will not flee the setting of his temptation when he is able still loves his sin. A mouse is foolish to build his nest under the cat's bed. "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." (Rom. 13:14)

12) You may make an effort to repent of some sins without repenting of all the sin you know: The businessman learns to show concern for the needs of his clients, yet he batters his wife through neglect. Another gives his money in the offering plate weekly but steals time from his employer daily. Every man boasts of some sins conquered, but true repentance is a repulsion of sin as a whole. The repentor hates all sin, though he fails more readily in some than in others. He may not know all his sins, but what he knows he spurns. Repentance is universal in the believer; the spirit is willing even when the flesh is weak (Mt. 26:41).

Look to Jesus! He is the One Who makes true repentance possible: Jesus never had to repent, but instead was sent, God's wrath on Christ was spent, to death He went, then rose alive content, so that now, by His mercy, you can truly repent!

We all need to repent
We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God
We have not lived the righteous life that God requires
We deserve hell
But there is One Who never needed to repent
His name is Jesus, and He never repented of anything!

We need to repent
Adam and Eve repented of eating the forbidden fruit
Nakedness became shameful
They tried to hide from God
They blamed everyone but themselves
We became totally depraved
The creation was all cursed
But it was cursed in hope of the Last Adam Who would never repent
His name is Jesus, and He never had to repent!

We need to repent
Noah repented of drunkenness
Abraham repented of lying
Jacob repented of deceit
Judah repented of sexual immorality
Joseph's brothers needed to repent of hatred toward their brother
David repented of adultery and murder
Israel repented of idolatry, over and over again
The whole history of Israel is one of rebellion and disobedience to God
But Jesus, the better Israel and better everything, never had to repent!

We need to repent
John the Baptist came preaching repentance
Jesus came preaching repentance
Jesus' first message on earth and last message on earth was the same: repent!
Jesus' disciples were always having to repent of unbelief and pride
Judas should have repented for betraying His Lord
Peter did repent of denying His Lord with oaths, swearing, and cursing
Thomas repented of failure to believe that Jesus rose from the dead and called Him by Lord and my God
All of Jesus' disciples had to repent of leaving Jesus alone
All your heroes in the Bible had to repent, except One
All your other heroes in life have to repent, except One
Yes! One Man never had to repent
Jesus never had to repent!

We need to repent
Buddhists must repent because Buddha cannot save
Muslims must repent because Muhammad is a false prophet
Hindus must repent because there's only One God, and He's the Triune God: Father, Son, And Holy Spirit
Jews must repent because Jesus is the Messiah
But Jesus never had to repent!

We need to repent
But Jesus never had to repent
Jesus didn't need to repent of always doing His Father's will perfectly
Jesus didn't need to repent of perfect faith
Jesus didn't need to repent of perfect hope
Jesus didn't need to repent of perfect love
Jesus didn't need to repent of conquering every temptation of Satan
Jesus didn't need to repent of overcoming every obstacle and challenge thrown at Him
Jesus didn't need to repent of allowing Himself to be beaten, spit on, stripped naked, mocked, and crushed and killed under the full weight of the wrath of God
No! We need to repent!
But Jesus never had to repent!

We need to repent
But because Jesus never had to repent, He rose up from the dead! He is risen! He is risen indeed!
He's alive so that He might grant you all the gift of true repentance!
He causes you to repent by the power of His Spirit!
He alone can grant you true repentance as a free gift that leads to eternal life!
Because Jesus never had to repent!

Now we do repent!
We repent of lies
We repent of selfishness
We repent of pride and arrogance
We repent of lust
We repent of adultery and all forms of sexual immorality
We repent of drunkenness and drug use
We repent of unbelief
We repent of worry and anxiety
We repent of the love of money
We repent of disobeying parents and authorities
We repent of lovelessness and hate
We repent of all sin
We believe in Jesus and delight in Jesus and trust in Jesus!
We hate sin!
We turn from sin and fight sin!
We seek to live faithfully and do whatever He calls us to do!
We seek to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all that Jesus has commanded!
We are enabled and empowered by His Spirit to obey all that He has commanded us for the glory of God!
We are being conformed into the image of Christ day by day for the glory of our King!
And even now He prays and intercedes for us according to the will of God!
His name is Jesus, and He never had to repent!

Christ Never Needed To Repent
For Us, By God, The God-Man's Sent
He's Perfect, Sinless, Full Extent
He's Righteous, Pure, In God Content
Yet On His Head God's Wrath Was Spent
God's Anger On That Cross Torment
To Horrible, Tragic Death He Went
To The Dead He Made Decent

Then Rose Alive, Crushed Death's Intent
In Glory-Power Made Accent
So Trust Him Now, By Faith Assent
All Your Sins Hate, Weep, Lament
He Died So Now You Can Repent
And Be For Him All That God Meant
For Christ Is All! Him Represent
For Love, All This, He Underwent!