

## **Repentance in the Christian life**

Do you repent each day? Is repentance a regular and normal part of your Christian experience? You may say, “I repented – it was ten years ago, when I became a Christian”. That is good. But do you say, “I am repenting, day by day?” If not, that is bad! In this sermon we want to see that repentance should (must!) be continual.

### **1. Why once is not enough (Matthew 5:3-5, 6:9-12)**

It is not enough to repent once at the beginning of our Christian lives. Firstly, we have sinned since that time – so we have sin to repent of. In the Lord's prayer, we pray for daily bread – and daily forgiveness. Our sins now are worse, because we have sinned whilst knowing Christ and God's word. Now, we sin whilst carrying the name of Christ as ambassadors. We must repent because we are learning how deceitful and corrupt our hearts are (Romans 7:15, 19). If we are not continuing to repent then we are growing pride. Perhaps we would not actually say with our lips (1 John 1:8-10) “I have no sin”, but if we are not regularly repenting then we are saying it in practice. Do not despair if, since being saved, you feel more sinful than you did before. If this realisation moves you nearer to stay nearer to Christ, it is doing you very much good!

### **2. Why daily repentance is good for us (Isaiah 57:15, Psalm 138:6)**

We sing “Jesus keep me near the cross”. Near the cross, we are safe – we are near Jesus and his precious blood. But what will take us to the cross? It is the knowledge that we have sinned; Jesus died for sinners! Repenting helps us to keep short accounts with God, and to keep renewing our fellowship with him; see Psalm 32:3-5. God makes great promises to those who are humble and mourn for sins; he says that he dwells with the lowly – but he stays far away from the proud. Do you want to walk with God? Then you must walk in continual repentance! If we preach repentance to others, then we must also practice repentance ourselves. If we are repenting people, then we will be brothers and sisters who are easy to walk together with. We will have peace and joy by forgiving each other.

### **3. What we must do in particular (Luke 17:4, Matthew 6:9, 12, 14-15)**

Here is some practical advice, to help us to practice daily repentance. Firstly, we should begin and end each day with prayer and confession of our sins to God. God made us, and God knows the day he will take us away. God is the beginning and the end. The Lord's Prayer teaches us to confess our sins each day. We should make sure we go often to Jesus and the cross in our prayers. That is our remedy! If we died and rose with Christ, then we must stay close to Christ. When we confess our sins, we should confess our actual sins, specifically; not just sin in general. We must attack the enemy (sin) where it is strong. We must also confess our sins to each other, restore what we have taken, and then forgive each other. This keeps us united and therefore strong.