

# A WAVE OF REPENTANCE WILL RELEASE A WAVE OF REVIVAL

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Great revivals have always been preceded by great prayers and great repentance.

Repentance means “change.” It does not mean “Do penance,” as the Vulgate Bible famously mistranslated it, nor does it mean “acknowledge you are a horrible person” as many have implied. It has two facets: **TURNING FROM AND TURNING TO.** We **turn from** our independence from God and we **turn to** His mercy and forgiveness. We turn from the sinfulness of our Adam nature and we receive a new nature - the Holy Spirit, the life of the Resurrected Jesus.

The great apostolic message is *“though our sins be as scarlet they shall be as snow; though they be as crimson they shall be as white as wool ..”* (Isaiah 1.18) We are not accepted because we have ‘shaped up.’ We are accepted **in spite of** our failure to ‘shape up’ or ‘measure up.’ The message of the gospel is not that God is angry with us because of our sins, but that He, in His love has sent Jesus to take the penalty for our sins. Because of this there is now a straight way home for all to the love, care, mercy and blessing of God, our Loving Heavenly Father. It is never too late to come home to Him. Since the Cross, it is not our sin that disqualifies us – it is our lack of faith, our independence and our failure to come home. Repentance is a call to all to turn away from independence, put our faith in the Cross and return to life in care of Our Loving Heavenly Father. The main issue, now is not our sins but the root of all sin - our independent sin nature.

Revival – the contagious movement of the Holy Spirit over our nations - is often stalled because we replace this great invitation with a legalistic program of self-improvement. The second thing that stalls revival is that we often stop at the message of forgiveness and do not allow the Spirit to transform us completely. There is a repentance for acceptance and forgiveness but there is also an **ongoing repentance for transformation.**

God is not angry with the world, for Jesus bore the wrath of God for all. He is the propitiation (blame taker) of the sin of all, even before they turn and receive it. *“And he is the **propitiation** for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”* (1 John 2.2) However, He also is the

judge of the world, and those, who ignore His help, place themselves beyond His help and remain estranged from him in the misery of their selfish nature and under the oppression of the evil one.

As we cry out to the Lord for new revivals and awakenings, the Body of Christ can stand up boldly and call the **world** to repent from its independence and return to reliance on the mercy and care of a loving God and learn to depend in Him. At the same time we **call the church** to repentance **from its sin** and **from its love of the world.** The sinful habits of the old man are incompatible with the nature of the Holy One who lives in us. That is why Paul says that all who **put on Christ** must **put off the sinful habits** of the old man such as covetousness, rage, lewdness, drunkenness etc. (Col. 2.11; 3.8) The Spirit demands and empowers us to put away these old sin habits, but He is also demands and empowers us to break our cozy alliance with the world and its ways, and to stand in bold opposition to its values and measurements. How can the light of Jesus shine through us if we keep Him hidden under the rocks our selfishness and our worldly nature?

There is no legalism in this, because it is the **heart** that has been changed, and the behavioral changes are simply bringing our lives into line with our new nature and identity. It is not a matter of “do’s and don’ts” but allowing the Spirit of God rule over us and completely transform us. We do not permit resentment, bitterness, jealousy, uncleanness to remain in our hearts anymore, but we let the Holy Spirit conquer our hearts with His wonderful fruit. We build on His forgiveness and begin to arrange our lives around Him, His instructions, His plans and ways.

Yes, there is an **urgent need of repentance** throughout the Body of Christ - **not for acceptance but for transformation** and to remove the blockages of sin and worldliness that hinder God’s light and life been seen in us. When this kind of repentance is preached and practiced by the church, it will trigger this next awakening. We will put aside our selfish and worldly ways so that we no longer hinder the light of God’s love and power from streaming out of us. This will not be accomplished by religious self-righteous effort but by drawing on His Spirit to strengthen us to totally transform us from within.