

# Repentance - Part 2

by Derek Prince

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*Derek Prince's sermon emphasizes the necessity of true repentance as a heartfelt submission to God, illustrated through the parable of the prodigal son and the importance of addressing hidden sins.*

**Duration:** 28:07

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:21-24, Matthew 5:48, Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:11-16, James 2:10

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Spiritual Transformation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the parable of the prodigal son from Luke chapter 15. He highlights the contrast between the younger son, who repents and returns to his father, and the elder son, who is religious but not repentant. The preacher emphasizes the importance of repentance and letting God deal with the hidden sins in our lives. He shares a personal story of a man who experienced a dramatic transformation after allowing God to deal with a specific issue in his life. The sermon emphasizes the need for truth and self-awareness in our relationship with God.

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## Transcript

Submitting to God, that is repentance. There's one picture in the New Testament, very familiar story, the story of the prodigal son, which I believe is the clearest example in actual incident of what it means to repent. I'm going to read to you the opening verses of this beautiful story from Luke chapter 15.

The 15th chapter of Luke's Gospel. Jesus is speaking 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.

And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 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. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hard servants of my father have bread enough unto spare, and I perish with hunger.

You notice the word perish there. It's rather significant. That young man had those two alternatives, to perish or to repent.

Now let's read his decision. 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 hard servants.

And he arose and came to his father. That is the perfect picture of repentance. It's a decision followed by an action.

Notice how he came to it. He had turned his back on father and on home. Had gone his own way, and ended up empty, lonely, frustrated, without a future.

The scripture says he came to himself. He came to the moment of truth. He really saw what he'd done, and what his true position was.

God really cannot deal with us, until we come to that moment of truth. The moment where we see things as they really are. See the truth about ourselves.

Get rid of our pretty pictures, and our fancy illusions, and our religious language. So much amongst religious people, is covered up by religious cliches. We don't come to ourselves, because we've got some religious language, that will cover the situation up.

We breathe some platitude, like Jesus will undertake. But it isn't always that way. God is dealing with something in you and me.

I had a man, who was a friend of mine. He came to live near where we live now in Florida. I must speak in such a way, that I don't make his identity known.

He had a good profession. Able man. But he'd come to the point of a nervous breakdown.

Was losing his professional practice. And in desperation turned to God, and received Jesus Christ and was saved. But still his life was out of joint.

He'd got out of the way, and just salvation hadn't got him back. And he moved and took a practice near where we live. And came quite often to talk with my wife and me with his wife.

Their home situation was unhappy. They had one girl and the relationship was not good. And she was going away, that they really didn't feel was the right way for her.

And he still wasn't making the money that he needed to make. He was losing money and getting into debt. And yet working hard, and doing everything that ought to have produced success.

And one day he phoned me and said, I want to come and see you with my wife. And I was very busy. And I really didn't want to give anybody that time.

But I knew there was something in his voice that showed me I had to say yes. And he came. He sat there with his wife.

My wife and me. And we talked. And gradually he came to the very thing in his life, in his past, which God required to be set right.

And when he opened up and spoke about this one particular thing, it was really a miracle. The Spirit of God came down over him. And he collapsed.

He was a strong, able, intelligent young man, not old. But he just collapsed like a little child. Sobbed almost in my arms.

And God dealt with him about this one thing, which was still outstanding between God and him. Within a week, he was on the move. He moved from Florida.

Purchased another position. Opened a practice. His daughter came back.

Within about three months, the whole of that family was entirely redirected. And it all happened at that one moment, where he let God deal with the one thing that he'd covered up and refused to have dealt with in his life. I can't recall ever seeing anything more dramatic.

I've seen many, many people have dramatic encounters with God. But this, it was so instantaneous. The moment that that one thing was dealt with in his life.

Everything was clear between God and him. He could find his way back into God's plan for his life and move on again. His home was blessed.

His business was blessed. He was happy. He was free.

And as I knew something of the background in the past two years of his life, I saw how God had been pushing him, pushing him, pushing him, pushing him. He would try to move to the right, God would push him in. He'd try to move to the left, God would push him in.

God brought him to that place where there was no way past the thing that had to be dealt with. And when that thing was brought out into the open and he surrendered, that's all he had to do. That's all that God asked, was acknowledge, surrender.

That is how God deals with us. I've counseled so many, many people and I've seen that somewhere there's one point on which a person is still holding out against God. There's one thing they don't want to confess.

That's one thing they don't want to change. There's just one condition they don't want to meet. And God will not deal with them.

God doesn't bargain with us. We have no bargains to make with God. We only have one thing to do.

Submit. Yield. Obey.

And the way to that is repentance. The young man, the prodigal son in this parable, he came to the point where there was just no way out. He made a decision.

I've been a fool. I've gone wrong. I'm not justifying myself.

I'm not excusing myself. But I'm going back. And he made up his mind in advance what he would say.

He would say, Father, I have sinned. Not you've been too strict or too narrow in your views or there was too much religion in the home. But I have been wrong.

And I no more worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants. That's humility.

When a person has truly repented, if it's necessary to sweep the floors, they'll sweep the floors. They don't argue. They don't say, God, I'm on a higher level than that.

And he came back. We'll read the next few verses of that story. And he arose, came to his father.

See, the decision was not complete until he turned around and went. It's one thing to make a decision. It's another thing to carry it out.

That's complete repentance. Make the decision. Turn around and move back.

And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion. The Greek word for to have compassion means to be moved in this area, in here.

The Greek word is related to the word for the bowels. This inner part of us, which is the real center of our deepest feelings. His father had this tremendous inward reaction and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

See, the father was longing for his son. But he couldn't move till the son had made that first required move. The move of repentance.

The son said, Father, I've sinned against heaven in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father never let him go any further. He was going to say, Make me as one of thy hired servants.

But before he could say that, the father said, Treat him as the honored son of the family. Bring out the best robe. Kill the fatted calf.

Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. See how many of us are alienated from the best that God has. Because we don't do what that young man did.

It's very interesting. The elder brother came in a little later and he was angry that his father had taken back the son who'd wasted his living. But you know, when you study the character and behavior of the elder brother, you find out one thing.

He was religious, but not repentant. And so much of this is happening today in the church, amongst people across this nation and around the world. The people that you don't think would be religious are realizing what it means to repent.

They're laying aside their stubbornness and their rebellion. They're turning around and coming back to father. And then so many of the people whom you would expect to rejoice and welcome them are sour and unhappy because they won't meet the condition which is repentance.

You see religious people need to repent just as much as the unconverted and the unchurched. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

In most cases that way is a religious way. We've got our own religious standards, our own religious practices, our own religious associations. And it's harder for a religious person to repent than for a person who doesn't make any profession of religion.

When the Lord graciously met me over 30 years ago, I really knew nothing about religion. But I knew one thing, I was a sinner. I had no problems.

I've never had any problems in acknowledging that I'm a sinner. And I think that made it much easier for me to get to God. It's a decision followed by an action, an acknowledgement.

I have sinned. Father, I'm not arguing. I'm not excusing.

I'm not justifying myself. I have no arguments to offer. Here I am.

I'll do whatever you say. That's repentance. There's a picture of repentance that I'd like to give you too, from the Old Testament.

In the ordinances of the Levitical priesthood, something that might seem very remote and unrelated. But in the fourth chapter of Leviticus it speaks about the sin offering. And it says that if the priest sins, he shall obtain for his offering a bullock.

And he shall bring the bullock before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, that was the place of assembly of God's people under that religious system. And he shall lay his hands upon the head of the bullock. And he shall confess his sin over the bullock.

And then it says, he shall slay the bullock. That's repentance. It's slaying the bullock.

See the bullock, the sin offering, symbolically when the priest laid his hands on the head of the bullock, and confessed his sin over the bullock, his sin was transferred from himself to the bullock. The bullock became identified with his sin. This is the law of the offerings under the old covenant.

Now if the priest had simply confessed his sin, and laid his hands on the head of the bullock, that would not have resolved his problem. The next thing he had to do was kill the bullock. And when he killed the bullock, he killed his own sin.

He identified himself with God's judgment on his sin. Repentance is killing the bullock. Rufus Mosley, that great saint of God who's with the Lord, and has been for some years, used to say this, remember you're forgiven when you stop doing it.

If you haven't stopped doing it, you're not forgiven. If you've just confessed your sin, and transferred it to the bullock, but you haven't taken that sharp knife, and killed the bullock, your problem isn't resolved. Many, many people are unwilling to kill the bullock.

In Psalm 139, David, David was a man who knew what repentance was. There are many of his psalms that speak of repentance. Psalm 51 of course is the famous penitent psalm.

But I'd like to read some words of his from Psalm 139. The last four verses of Psalm 139. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee.

And I'm not, I grieve, with those that rise up against Thee. I hate them with perfect hatred. I count them mine enemies.

I ask Christian people sometimes, Can we as Christians say that? I hate them with perfect hatred. I count them mine enemies. Some people say yes, and some people say no.

Christians shouldn't speak like that. I say to them, read the next two verses, and see where David was looking for God's enemies. He says, Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting.

David wasn't concerned about enemies of God outside. David was concerned about enemies of God inside his own heart and life. He said, God, if there are any enemies of yours in me, they are my enemies too.

I hate them. I don't want them. I won't compromise with them.

I'll not make peace with them. I'll not tolerate them. So many times I've told people, if you're prepared to tolerate the devil, you'll have to tolerate him.

As long as you'll tolerate him, he'll stay. When you hate him, he'll go. A young man came to me once and said, Brother Prince, I think I have a demon of lust.

But he said, I'd rather enjoy it. Do you think God will deliver me? I said, definitely not. As long as you enjoy it, you can keep it.

God won't deliver you from your friends. God will deliver you from your enemies. So if there's an enemy of God in your life, make God's enemy your enemy, and God will come to your help.

I wonder if you remember that phrase that used to be so common. Those of us that passed through World War II, one of the phrases that was always being used was the fifth column. I don't know whether you know the origin of that phrase, but it originated in the Spanish Civil War in 1936, when there was a civil war inside Spain.

The Spaniards fighting each other. And in this war, there was a certain general besieging a Spanish city. And a second general came to him and said, General, what is your plan to take this city? And the first general answered and said, I have four columns advancing against the city.

One from the north, one from the south, one from the east, and one from the west. Then he paused and added, but it's my fifth column, I'm expecting to take the city for me. So the second general said, where is the fifth column? And the first general replied, inside the city.

That's the origin of the phrase, the fifth column. It's the column that doesn't attack from without. It's the column that works within.

And all Christians are defeated, if ever they are defeated, by the fifth column. The devil cannot defeat you from without. But if there's a fifth column inside you, that's how he'll overthrow you.

And he'll have his fifth column there, as long as you tolerate it. But if you say like David, Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts.

See if there be any wicked way in me, anything abelial, any evil thing. Then God, I'll declare war on that thing. I'll hate that thing.

I'll rid myself of that thing. I will not tolerate your enemies in my life. That is repentance in action.

I was in a certain situation. I was in an assembly of God church, in a city which I won't identify. And I conducted on the Friday evening, a service for those that needed deliverance from evil spirits.

There was there, the wife of a Baptist pastor, who did not believe what I was preaching. And I've come to know the lady since, and she shared with me her reaction. She said, I hated you with all my guts.

If I could have gone up and gone out, I would have done. But she didn't share this with me at the time at all. The next morning, Saturday morning, I conducted a Bible study in the same church.

And this lady was there. Now the Bible study had nothing to do with deliverance, or any of these things, I forget what it was about. But at the end of the service, this pastor's wife came up to me and she said, Mr. Prince, I need deliverance.

Well, I didn't, I've learned, one of the secrets is to let people get desperate. Deliverance is for the desperate. When you get desperate, God will come to your help.

So I didn't react, I just said, well that's fine. She said, I need deliverance right now. I said, good.

She said, I've got to have it. I said, praise the Lord. But I didn't offer to do anything for it.

And she just went to the altar, kneeled down and started to pray. And she prayed louder and louder and louder until everybody in the church could hear what she was saying. And she was saying words which astonished me.

She said, there isn't a drop of blue blood in my vein. There isn't a drop of blue blood in my vein. There isn't a drop of blue blood in my vein.

Well, because I'm of British background and I'm used to snobbery in Britain. And British people don't consider that anything's old unless it's 300 years old. But I really wasn't aware that Americans ever thought like that.

So I just listened in astonishment. She went on making this declaration and God met her at the altar of that church. I didn't pray with her.

Nobody prayed with her. God met her. She told me afterwards, she said, you know, I'd always been brought up to believe.

In fact, I'd been trained in this that my ancestors came over in the Mayflower. She said, I thought I was something special. I had a special background that made me different from other people.

She said, while you were speaking, God dealt with me about my pride. And God brought her to the place where he put his finger on the very thing in her life that was between God and her. Her pride in her background, her ancestry.

And God brought that rather proud Baptist pastor's wife to the place where in an assembly of God's church she would lay bare this thing for the hearing of all who were present. And when she did that, she was delivered. Pride, the power of pride over her was broken.

This is the place that we have to come to. Jesus said in one place, if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out evil spirits. And in the corresponding passage in another gospel, he said, if I, by the finger of God, cast out evil

spirits.

So we learn that the Spirit of God is the finger of God. This is very revealing. The Spirit is not like a great hand that reaches down and covers an area.

He's just like a finger that reaches out and just one tip touches the very thing that needs to be touched. And when the Spirit touches that thing in your life or in my life, which is our point of rebellion against God. Then when we humble ourselves, then when we submit, the breakthrough comes, the release.

God can set us off on the right direction again. He can treat us like the prodigal. He can say, I've been waiting for you.

I'm ready to receive you now. You can put off the rags. You can put on the ring, the symbol of authority.

You can put on the robe, the symbol of righteousness. You can put on the shoes, the symbol of the gospel of peace. But as long as there is unseen rebellion within the heart, there can be no acceptance in the fullest sense with God.

So that the pointed issue between God and you must be resolved. The thing that in your heart and life is not in line with God's will and God's requirements. The Holy Spirit has to put his finger on it.

Touch it. It's not a big area. Just one particular thing.

The scripture says that he that keeps the whole law and offends in one point is guilty of all. And it's true in our relationship with God. We may be willing to do God's will in every area except one.

But when we resist in one area, we are rebels. I want to close by praying that prayer that David prayed. And if you want to say it with me, do.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts. See if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

Amen. For further teaching on this theme, we recommend the cassette, Entrance into God's Kingdom, No. 2001.

For further information and a resource guide containing all audio and video cassettes and books, please contact Derrick Prince Ministries, Box 19-501, Department T, Charlotte, NC 28219. Telephone 704-357-3556.

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