

Repentance

by Lewis Williams

Repentance is a necessary step towards salvation, involving a knowledge of sin and a turning away from it, and it's the church's responsibility to preach the truth about repentance.

Scripture: Proverbs 28:13, Matthew 3:1, Luke 3:8, Acts 3:19, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Ephesians 4:22, Ephesians 5:8, James 5:16, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Repentance", "Salvation"

Description

Lewis Williams preaches about the importance of repentance and preparing the way for the Lord, drawing parallels between the message of John the Baptist in the wilderness and the need for individuals to acknowledge their sins, confess them, and bring forth fruits of repentance. He emphasizes the consequences of sin and the necessity of abandoning sinful ways to find God's forgiveness and salvation. Williams highlights the significance of confession, restitution, and complete abandonment of sin as essential steps towards true repentance and experiencing God's transformative power in one's life.

Transcript

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him all Jerusalem, and Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." MATT. iii.1-10.

Last night in our study in Genesis, we learned how God created man, pure, clean, and holy, in His own Divine image; that man fell through disobedience, and that in his fall he lost that beautiful Divine image, or nature, in which he had been created; and that in its place he had received the devil's own sinful, carnal, sensual, rebellious nature, which drove him from the Garden of Eden. I want you to briefly notice some of the effects of loosing that Divine nature and receiving the carnal nature. It cost Adam the Garden of Eden.

Fifteen hundred and fifty-six years passed by since the world was peopled with the first pair, when, in the sixth chapter of Genesis, we read that "it repented the Lord that He had made man; that the wickedness of man was very great, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," that all flesh had corrupted his way. Hell had opened its yawning mouth and was being populated with human souls as a result of the fall of man from Holiness. God said, I will stop the supply, I will destroy man from the earth; but we are told that one preacher and his family were saved. But Noah is only out of the ark about three years until he gets drunk and curses his own son. That is what sin does; it makes man curse his own offspring. I have no doubt there are many here tonight who are cursing their own in more ways than one. In the eleventh chapter of Genesis we read that the people had greatly increased again, and organized themselves against God, and that He confounded their languages and scattered them abroad. In the twelfth chapter God goes off down into idolatry and calls out Abraham and puts up with his wanderings ; and in the seventeenth chapter He says to him, "Walk thou before me, and be thou perfect, and I will cause nations to come out of thee." Two hundred and sixty-three years afterwards, we find his posterity down in Egypt groaning under the taskmaster's lash, making bricks without straw. With a high and mighty hand He brought them out, and at Mt. Sinai gave them a code of morals by which to live, and said to them, Obey me, and I will place you in a country flowing with milk and honey, where you will not have to dig wells, build your houses, or plant your vineyards. They went and obeyed Him a little while; but, like too many of today, grew weary of the fight and sat down to mingle with forbidden people, backslid, went into sin, and continually broke the laws of God. For hundreds of years the prophets thundered against their sinfulness and Sabbath breaking until they were carried away into Babylonian captivity where they hung their harps on the willows and refused to be comforted.

Again and again, God reinstalled them, until we come down to the last of the minor prophets and hear Malachi thundering out against a backslidden people, saying, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and prove me now, and see if I do not pour you out a blessing, that there will not be room to receive it" I know this text has been almost spiritualized away from its meaning, but what was the tithe? A ten per cent. of the gross income of the Jew. The offering came out of the nine-tenths. Hear his charge against them! "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar, ye offer the blind for sacrifice." Instead of the lambs being without blemish, they were giving the blind and the lame and the sick. "Who is there among you that would shut the doors for naught, neither do you kindle a fire on my altar for naught. Ye have brought that which was torn and the lame and the sick. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord."

"The priest's lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth for he is the messenger of the Lord," but "ye have departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble; ye have corrupted the covenant." My God, what an arraignment that was and what a picture it is today! Are men bringing their best to God today? What is the organized church doing with the tenth proposition? Grab-bags, fishponds, pie socials, rummage and rubber sales to help Jesus pay His debts. Go in on a Sunday morning and ask all the congregation who pay a tenth of their gross income into the Lord's treasury to stand, and how many, think you, would rise? How many of the prophets (preachers) proclaim the truth concerning sin? "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "He that is born of God doth not commit sin." How many kindle a fire on the altar for naught? That is, proclaim these truths by the power of the Holy Ghost, until awful conviction settles over the congregation and men repent and cry mightily to God for salvation from sin, until fire falls from Heaven? How many are willing to cast positions and salaries to the four winds and proclaim a full Gospel that saves from all sin? God left Israel for almost four hundred years with scarcely a word from Him: and with no word from God, how could

many find Him? I am informed that Mr. D. L. Moody once said, "There are three thousand churches east of the Allegheny Mountains, which, by their own records, cannot show the conversion of a single soul in twelve months." Just a few days ago, I was informed that there were eight thousand churches in this country that did not have a convert last year. My Father in Heaven, what does that mean? Eight thousand churches, eight thousand preachers, eight thousand Sunday school superintendents, averaging seven Sunday school teachers to the church; that would mean over fifty thousand Sunday school teachers. If each church averaged but two hundred and fifty members, that would mean two millions of professed Christians; but not enough light and power in the whole mass to lead one soul to Christ. Men do not get saved these days by sticking up their finger, or signing a card, or joining the meeting-house. No one ever gets saved until he abandons sin and repents, and how many are doing that? Thank God, there are some; but how few compared to the equipment for soul-winning of the organized church of today.

Listening to an evangelist recently, one whose name is known from ocean to ocean, we heard him say that over eight hundred preachers left the pulpit yearly in this land of ours. What becomes of the men who disobey and run away from God? It does look dark, doesn't it?

We boast of our country and of our religion; but look a moment at some facts. We have 250,000 saloons in this country; we have 700,000 drunkards; kill 27,000 babies yearly by being lain on by drunken parents, and spend \$684,000,000 annually for court fees, and almost \$2,000,000,000 for liquor. We spend \$1 for bread and \$5 for liquor; \$1 for education, \$10 for liquor, \$1 for church to \$12.85 for drink; and \$18 for missions to help save the world, and \$107 to help damn it. I wonder how long it will take to convert it at that rate?

The organized church is large enough to hold the balance of power and vote every licensed rum hole out of existence in a day, and to see that the laws are rigidly enforced; but the church and the saloon go arm and arm to the polls and both vote the same ticket. Can God put His seal on such a damnation of souls? Many say, "I vote as I pray." Very well, let us look at it. Who and what do you vote for? Did you vote with the party and help to place it in power; that party that licenses the sale of liquor and makes the saloon as legal as this meeting? If so, you are responsible at the bar of Almighty God for the murder, raping, and wholesale damnation that is being done by the liquor traffic. I don't care a fig whether you are in pulpit or pew, if you declare you vote as you pray, and then vote with a whiskey party, you say by your prayers, "Lord God, I pray thee, pour liquid damnation down their throats until their very bones are set on fire, until they beat and kill and drive to Hell forever 700,000 souls this coming year. The drink traffic did it last year. O Lord, do it again this year. For Jesus Christ's sake, kill 27,000 innocent, helpless babies this year, by helping me to vote for the party that will put liquor where their parents can get it legally, and then lie on them and crush their little lives out. O Lord, I pray thee, ruin the boys of our land, debauch 500,000 innocent girls this year, catch their unwary feet and steal their virtue and drive them in herds to the brothels, sink them in potter's fields, and damn their souls in Hell, world without end, for Jesus' sake, and we will give thee all the praise. Turn some more bishops into saloon organizers. Rally many more around the standard of Brother Potter; and at every saloon we open and where we start the legalized sale of liquid damnation we will sing, 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,' and for this wholesale destruction and damnation we will give thee all the glory, now and forever. Amen."

If you stick to it that you vote as you pray, and you vote for a party sold to the liquor interest, those are your prayers. How do you like it? Wouldn't it look nice in print? As a child of God, could or would you pray like that? And yet there are thousands upon thousands who are church members and preachers voting and helping on by their vote that very thing.

Some time ago the little children of New England were stood up by the polls on election day, with ribbons pinned on them, on which was printed, "Vote for me and Jesus," but fathers, preachers and church members walked past their little forms and helped to place in power a party sold to the liquor interest. Is it to be thought strange that God does not pour out His Spirit in power on the church of today? Is it strange that so many pews are empty and that thousands are in attendance upon the Sunday ball games and races? Is it strange that the very flower of our youth turns from the house of worship to find pleasure in the theatre, with its suggestive language, indecent actions and exposure of limbs, and in the ball-room and parlor dance with all their sensuality? Is it to be wondered at that unsaved and ungodly men boast to our faces that the secret lodge, with its idolatrous altars and blasphemous oaths, is better than the church; and boast to us that many leading church members and preachers are one with them in the lodge, and to us, "If the church is what you say it is, if religion satisfies, why is it the members and preachers come to the lodge?" Listen to the closing words of Malachi: "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts." Are you proud? Do you do wickedly? Commit sin? Then repent, or read your doom.

Such was the condition of things for nearly four hundred years. God had left this old world on its funeral march Hellward, when there came strange reports of a strange man, dressed in a strange garb and proclaiming a strange Gospel. John the Baptist came on the scene crying out to backslidden Israel, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" that is, the King is coming. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord;" and when the backslidden officials, Pharisees and Sadducees, came to his baptism, he refused and said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." They thought because of their relation to Abraham they were all right. But John called them vipers and refused to baptize them until they would bring forth fruits meet for repentance. It is true that by his plain teaching John lost his head, but Jesus said of him, "Of all the prophets, there is none greater than John the Baptist." He had the admiration of the Son of God if he did lose his head. And I would rather die this hour, and go sweeping through the gates with the admiration of the Son of God, than to have all the gold you have in the banks of your city.

No doubt many cried out against John, because he laid the ax to the root of things, and the man who does that today will find his path strewn with something besides roses. He will be misunderstood, lied about, slandered, called a disturber of the church, and many doors will be closed against him, for the sole reason that he plainly tells the real condition of things; but John had it to bear, Jesus had it, the disciples all came in for their share, and if you go straight and walk with God, you will find there is always a dungeon for a Jeremiah, a Jezebel for an Elijah, a Herod or Herodias for a John the Baptist, a cross for every Christian, and for every disciple that dares to place his feet in the bloody foot-prints of the lonely Galilean Carpenter, there will be the same misrepresentation, oft-times made by the very ones whom he seeks to comfort, bless and save. He will find the path narrowing down, and pointing hard toward the Isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ; but in his loneliness and ostracism, God will open the secrets of the skies to his upturned gaze, and grant him revelations unknown to others. Jesus said, "If ye suffer with me, ye shall also reign with me." So, with the realization that we are liable to be misquoted and misunderstood, even by those we seek to help, we go to our knees, and with tearful eyes, promise Him who redeemed us by His blood to preach the truth as we see it. Bless His dear name, He says He will see us through!

But let us look a little at John's message. He cried, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; make straight paths, bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

Nobody ever found the Lord until he repented. Repentance means much more than most people think. One of the first things it means is a knowledge of sin. No one will repent and cry out to God to save him from a devil's Hell until he first realizes himself to be lost. He must know himself to be a sinner, lost and undone, without Christ, before God can do anything for him.

It is said that one day Mr. Whitefield and his unsaved brother were dining with Lady Huntington, and that the conversation about the table was of such a character that the brother threw up his hands and began crying, "I am lost! I am lost! If what you say is true, I am lost!" Lady Huntington clapped her hands, saying, "I am so glad, so glad!" "What!" said the man, "glad to think I am lost?" "No," she replied, "but happy to know you have found it out, for now there is hope for you, for Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost."

Some time ago in an eastern city, we stepped into a stationery store close by where a meeting was going on. We were waited upon by the proprietor, and we asked if he had attended any of the services. He replied, "No." We invited him to come; but he replied, "I never go to church. I do business fair, honest, and square, and what time I have left from my business I devote entirely to my family." Well, now I am sure we could all wish that there were more men who would do business on fair and honest principles, and less who would stoop to what are called "tricks of the trade," most of which are simply misrepresenting, and a misrepresentation knowingly made is as black a lie as Hell ever hatched. If you have been guilty of knowingly misrepresenting anybody or anything, you are a liar in the sight of God, and my Bible tells me that all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire. Men stoop to lying to further their ends, place the large potatoes or apples in the ends of the barrel, and the small ones in the center, making believe that they are all large nothing but business liars on their way to Hell. Sometimes folks will go out and change a word or two that some preacher said, or take a sentence away from its setting, making it mean something the man of God did not mean; such persons are liars, and unless such things are confessed and repented of, they will make their beds in Hell. We could wish there were more men who would do business on fair, honest lines; but that will not save them. The Book says that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Consequently all must repent, and that they will not do until they see themselves to be sinners and lost without God. Again, we wish that there were more men who would spend more time with their families and less time in a secret lodge-room; but even that will not save them: they must see themselves as lost before they will repent.

Again, there are many among our neighbors who are kind and obliging; they will come ill and nurse us when sick and accommodate us in many ways; they live straight, moral lives and are free from any bad habits. When spoken to about their souls, they say, "No, I have never been born again, have never had that radical change of heart you speak of. Have always attended to my own business and wronged no one," yet they have never been born again. And Jesus said, "Except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of heaven." They have never realized themselves to be lost, and unless they get a knowledge of sin, they will never repent, or cry out to God to save them from sin and Hell; consequently, they must have a knowledge of sin, and not only of the consequences, but of the thing itself, because it is sin.

After almost a score of years of service for God, I would frankly say, I have no confidence in about ninety-nine out of a hundred of the so-called death-bed repentances. I believe them to be a hoax of the devil palmed off to get souls to put off the all-important hour of deciding for Christ. I do believe the story of

the dying thief; but I also believe that thief had never heard of Jesus before, and as soon as he was told who He was, he cried unto Him, and Jesus heard his cry. But not so with you; you have heard many times, but you have not cried unto Him. I have had men curse me, and afterwards, when sick, believing themselves to be dying, they would send for me. I have gone and found them screaming for some one to pray for them, and when trying to point them to Jesus they could say little else but, "Pray for me, Mr. Preacher; pray for me!"

Again, when souls are on their death-beds, the past rises up before them and they see more vividly the consequences of their lives, that Hell is before them, and they are afraid to go and face the consequences of their lives. And in their fear, they plead with some one to pray to save them from the consequences of their wicked lives. God never saves men because they are frightened. I have heard some express themselves against the preaching of Hell-fire, thus: "I don't believe in frightening folks into religion." Well, sir, allow me to inform you that you never saw a person in all your life frightened into getting right with God. God only saves souls when they are sorry for their sins, confess them and abandon them, and on no other terms. Pharaoh was sorry for the consequences, and cried, "Take away the frogs!" David saw the awfulness of his sin, and cried, "Take away my sin!" If you want a good Bible picture of sorrow for sin, take a look at the Prodigal Son. He thought he knew more than his father; thought himself quite capable of managing his own affairs, and wanted, as the boys say now, to "paddle his own canoe," and he paddled it straight into the hog-pen, and there he came to a realization of the true state of affairs. He got a radical change of mind, and, with real sorrow for his act, said, "I will arise and go to my father" and confess.

In my boyhood days I learned to swear, but was always gentlemanly enough to refrain when in the presence of ladies. Being absent for some months, and returning to my home town, one day stepping into an ice-cream parlor and meeting a couple of my old chums, an oath escaped my lips. The proprietor quickly spoke to me, and glancing into another part of the room I saw a couple of young ladies whom I had not discovered to be there. Quickly I apologized, not because I was sorry that I had taken God's name in vain; no, no, I had no thought of God whatever at that time; but because the young ladies had heard me. I was sorry for the consequences. But the prodigal boy was sorry enough to retrace his steps, go back home and confess. And that brings me to a third step in repentance, and that is a confession of sin.

Here is where the trouble begins. The Book says, "If we confess our sins." Well, to whom? First, to the one you sinned against. What good to ask God to forgive me, when right there close by is the one I have wronged? I may pray till doom's-day, but so long as I can right my wrong treatment of my fellow creature, and refuse to do so, I will never get a word of pardon from God. Wrongs must be confessed and straightened up, where possible, before God will listen.

Sister, that lie you told will have to be confessed, or it will meet you on your dying bed and greet you at the judgment. It will sink your poor soul in a devil's Hell unless you confess it and get it out of existence. That lie that young girl told her mother; that lie that boy told his father; that lie that husband told his wife, will, if unconfessed, meet them at the judgment bar of God. The Book says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Every sin of every kind, unless confessed, and where possible straightened up, will bar your entrance to the Pearly Gates. "Make straight His paths," cried John, "and bring forth fruits meet for repentance." The blessed Christ will never come to your hearts around that old lie you told, that old debt you owe, or that which you stole, or that old grudge you hold. People kneel down and pray the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." If God only forgave as some have forgiven those who have wronged them, they would have landed as

straight in Hell as any angel that kept not his first estate. "Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us." Do you do it? Have you done it? You say, "No." Then I say you are no child of God, according to the teachings of this Book, for until you do, God cannot forgive you. And when people hold hard feelings and old grudges in their hearts towards others, and repeat the Lord's Prayer, they simply act the hypocrite in God's sight. "Make straight His paths." He will not come to your heart around that old grudge. It will make folks pay their honest debts. We ask some folks to come to the altar, and we had better, a thousand times over, send them to the grocery store or butcher shop to pay their honest debts. A man who owes an honest debt and does not pay it when able to do so, or make an honest effort to do so, is a liar and a thief. He promised he would, therefore he has lied; and he is keeping that which belongs to another, hence he is a thief. Do you think for a moment that God will give His Spirit to such a person? No, sir! You will have to make His way straight and clear, before He will come to your heart. The King of the skies will never come around such a piece of dishonesty.

Again, you will have to take back what you stole and confess the theft. Some time ago a man was walking across a field where his neighbor had been sowing wheat and noticed a short chain, called a stay-chain, on the harrow. He took the chain, and had it in his possession for some time, until God sent a man into that vicinity to preach the truth. This man attended the meetings and got under awful conviction, and became a seeker at the altar, and, as he afterwards told, up came that chain. He tried to pass it off as a little thing, but it would not pass off. He began to see chains in his dreams; had them about his neck, morning, noon and night. He could think of nothing much but stay-chains. Finally one night he carried the chain back and hung it on the side of the milk-house, and tried again to pray through, but still it bothered him, until in desperation he went to the neighbor and confessed the theft. "Why," said the neighbor, "I missed the chain and did not know what became of it, until a day ago I found it on the corner of the milk-house." The neighbor would have never known of the theft or who had the chain, but the Word of God says, "If we confess our sins," and the sin had to be confessed. You will have not only to take back what you stole, but to confess the deed. "Make straight his paths."

Last winter while preaching in Scotland, at the close of a service a young man came to me and said: "Mr. Williams, what shall I do? I professed conversion some time ago, but have never been satisfied. Some time ago I was employed by a firm, and while there stole some money, and it is not known by anybody but myself." I replied, "God knows about it." He said, "What shall I do?" I asked him, "How much did you steal, ten pounds?" "No, not that much." "Five pounds?" "Yes, more than that." "Seven pounds?" "Yes." "Eight pounds?" "Yes, all of that." "Have you that much money now?" "Yes, I have it in the bank." "Well, you must get it out and take it to the man you stole from, and confess the crime and pay him." "But he may put me in prison." "That is true; you deserve it; but it will be better to go to prison for awhile than to go to Hell forever. Go see your former employer, see him privately, open your heart to him, make a clean breast of the whole matter; tell him that you did wrong, that you are trying to get right with God and you want to be right with man. Tell him you are sorry, lay down the cash, tell him you are ready to do whatever he says about the matter." Two nights after he came smiling to me and said, It's all right. Mr. A. was very kind, and I have it all settled." "Me, too," said a young man who was with him, "I was in the same fix, but I got it settled and Jesus saved me." The second one had been influenced by the first one's action, and both had found God.

I know a young man who was seeking God; he remembered that he had crawled through a fence into a country fair-grounds without paying the entrance fee. God held it up before him, and, although it had been eight or ten years previous, yet he wrote and found who was the treasurer, and confessed and paid the quarter. It was put in the paper, but God put something into his soul that shone out of his young face.

Brother, I say unto you, if you want Jesus, the King of kings to come into your heart, you will have to make straight His paths and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance," or meet those things at the judgment.

I know of a young fellow who committed a crime in one of the mid-western states, and ran away. Another man was arrested for the deed and committed to the state prison on circumstantial evidence. A number of years passed and the man who committed the crime got into a meeting and fell under awful conviction. He told the leader of the meeting of his crime. He took him to the authorities and they put him under the custody of the leader. Then they wrote back where the crime had been committed, and the reply came back, "Yes, the crime was committed, and we have the man in prison." "You have the wrong man," and the real criminal was placed on board the cars and, with no officer, went nearly two thousand miles back to the place and gave himself up and set at liberty the innocent man. They put him to digging coal in the prison coal mines, but he had found Jesus and went at his work singing, "At the cross where I first saw the light, and the burden rolled away." He said, "I would rather go to Heaven from the bottom of this prison coal mine, than to go to Hell from the top of the ground."

Some years ago in a western city, at the close of an evening service, a man plucked at my coat sleeve, saying, "Is there anything in religion for me?" I replied that there was, and sat down by his side. "But you don't know who or what I am." "I do not care; my Bible says, 'Whosoever will'; that takes you in." We prayed together and he left, but came back the next morning and rang the door bell while I was at the breakfast table. I met him at the door. He will never be whiter when in his coffin than he was that morning. "Can I have a few moments with you?" he asked. "Come in, sir," I replied, and handing him the Bible, said, "Read it until I have finished my breakfast," and stepped back into the dining-room and closed the door. I did not want to eat, but wanted to give him time to calm down, for I saw he was greatly excited. When I returned to the room, he was down on the floor going through the Bible, and the book was in danger of having the leaves torn out. "Oh, sir, tell me, is there any hope for a murderer?" he said, "tell me quick!" I pointed him to the verse in Isaiah, first chapter, "Put away the evil of your doing, cease to do evil." "Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And again, John iii. i6, and John i. 9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "But, sir, you don't know! See those hands?" And he held out a pair of hands as soft and white as any lady's here present. "These hands have not earned an honest dollar in ten years." But I held up the promise before him, "If we confess." He then told me his story. He had learned to play cards, became a gambler, sat in a game with two of his pals and a rich man, who was found dead in the room the next day. He said, "We were trailed to this city and arrested, but the secret orders that I belong to packed the jury and they pronounced me not guilty and I went off free; but, before God, those hands are red with the blood of my fellow man," and he rolled on the floor in agony. I kept God's promise before him and prayed, and he finally got to pleading with God, and the promise was again verified that "if we confess our sins he will forgive." And the King came straight to his heart and rolled away the burden of guilt. I watched him for some time, but he went straight. God sanctified him, and he went into evangelistic work, and the last I heard of him God was giving him hundreds of souls. How different from the following, that I have clipped from the evening paper:

* * *

Suicide Leaves Account Of Crime Pinned To His Breast

Minot, N. D., Sept 13. -- The dead body of Charles Herzig, who left a written confession of the crimes of rape and murder committed near Youngstown, Ohio, over thirty years ago, has been found by a posse of

searchers hanging to a tree in a secluded ravine, just over the line in the unorganized county of Wallace. Pinned to his breast was a piece of wrapping paper on which was written the following:

"My name is Charles Herzig. Over thirty years ago I murdered and raped a young girl named Lizzie E Grombacher, near Youngstown, Ohio. Charles Sterling, an innocent man, was tried, convicted and hanged for the murder of this girl. If my body is ever found, notify my mother, Catherine Herzig, Girard, Ohio."

If Herzig had not left a written confession and threat of suicide at the "B. Y. R." ranch, his body might not have been found for years, as it was hanging in a spot seldom visited. Around his neck was a shred of green veiling, such as a woman uses for face veils. It is recalled by a former Youngstown man here that Lizzie Grombacher wore such a veil when murdered and that part of it was used to strangle her. The piece found about Herzig's neck is supposed to be the remainder of the veil, as he showed such a piece to a fellow ranchman named Olsen, to whom he told the story of his crime declaring that he had kept it all these years so as to use it to end his own life some day. Olsen recalled the details of Herzig's confession today. At the time it was made he thought Herzig demented. Herzig said that after committing the murder and exchanging shirts with Sterling, he went to Warren, Ohio, where he was employed as a gardener by a lawyer named Ratliff. After Sterling's arrest and trial, he fled to Mesopotamia, Pa., where he remained in hiding until the eve of Sterling's execution, when he stole a horse and went West. He settled in Telluride, Colorado, where he married. Ohio people commenced to move in and, becoming frightened, he deserted his wife and child and went to Death Valley, in California. Since then he has been a wanderer.

What will the judgment be for that soul? He has tried to get away from his conscience that has been stinging him all these years, but his misery has only begun. He will meet those he murdered at the bar of God, and go to a devil's Hell forever and ever. No end to his wail, no light for his poor soul. By his act he has placed himself beyond the reach of all help. Had he confessed his sins in time and sought God, he would have found help. O, brother, I beg of you this night, repent, repent and make a path so that the Son of God can come to that poor hungry, longing heart of yours. "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." God will see you through if you will cast your all on Him. That is just what the Prodigal Son did, and the father took him back again.

The last step in repentance is the complete abandonment of sin. All wrong-doing must stop at once and forever. No soul can find God and continue on in sin; it must be abandoned immediately. Had the prodigal remained in the hog-pen he would never have seen his father's face again. He left all the pigs in the pig-pen and did not go back with a squealing pig under either arm. He abandoned them when he turned about and started to retrace his steps. I have seen folks come to the altar professing to be sorry for their sins and repenting of their lies, but they brought back so much of the hog-pen with them that they found no welcome arms extended, nor kiss of pardon; a dirty old pipe or plug in one pocket, and a worldly secret lodge in the other, the majority of whose members are unsaved, ungodly Christ-rejecters, blasphemous and profane, bowing down before an idolatrous altar. All other altars outside of Christ are idolatrous, and you cannot remain in idolatry and get the King of kings to come to your soul. You will have to make straight His paths. And you cannot remain in the lodge that satisfies ungodly men, who prefer that to the cause and church of Christ, and get Jesus to come in power and take up His abode in your heart. The old Book says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Your becoming His son or daughter depends on your coming out and not touching the unclean thing. You remain in, and you cannot have relationship with God. Brother, this is in the Book.

What are you going to do about it? Obey God and be saved, or disobey and sink into a devil's Hell?

Along with confession and abandonment of sin comes restitution of wrongs which can be made right. There are things in many lives that all human power can never set right; but you will have to allow God to see an honest desire and a willingness to make them right, if He ever makes it possible for you to do so; but the things which you can make right you will have to do. You will have to make restitution where it is possible in God's sight for you to do so, and He will be the judge. You say, the cost is too much. Then you must face it at the Judgment and take the consequences there. I would rather face it now in mercy, than at the bar of God in Judgment. I heard of a man who altered a dead man's note and cheated the widow for many years; but God hung it up in front of him one day, and he had to sell all to get the necessary amount -- about seven thousand dollars, -- but when he got it straightened up, the burden of sin rolled away. Every little while we read of conscience money being sent back to the Government, and to those who have been defrauded for years. Brother, I tell you the Judgment is coming, and you had better repent and straighten up. It may cost you all of this world's goods, but better so, and go to Heaven from the poor-house, than to Hell from a gilded palace. Better die a beggar in the streets and pillow your head on Abraham's bosom, than to have the best this old sin-cursed world can give you and land in Hell at last. Better get out of the whiskey voting business and lose what you have, than to meet the poor souls at the Judgment that your vote helped to damn.

One last thought and I am through. Why is it that God demands such a straightening up of those who seek Him? I will tell you. He proposes to make them His sons and daughters and place them up before the whole world as samples of His power to save from all sin. He proposes to make them living, walking ambassadors on earth. When the Government wants an ambassador to represent it at a foreign court, it looks about for one whose character is unblemished and whose life is unimpeachable. Just so with God, His Son is with Him in glory, and the Bible sinners cannot understand. So He wants men and women, whom the devil and a gainsaying world, cannot find a flaw in; whose character is unblemished, and whose life is a living embodiment of Himself. The Christian is the sinner's Bible, and God wants men and women who will represent Him, and in whose lives the poor, lost world can see an example of His matchless grace and love. He proposes not only to make them His own sons and daughters, but living examples of Himself. Hear the Book speak, "Be ye imitators of God and walk as dear children; ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light." And He was the light of the world. He proposes to shine on darkened hearts, blighted hopes, and blasted lives through you, and thus to bring help to the helpless and hope to the hopeless. This He could not do unless you were like Him, hence John cried, "Make straight His paths." If you will repent and turn to Him, He will meet you more than half way. Will you do it?

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