

## Peter & Judas

### Acts 1:15-20

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 8-21-2011

## Introduction: How Peter and Judas were similar though different

This morning I want to preach on the amazing (and somewhat disconcerting) juxtaposition of Peter and Judas in this chapter. Here were two men who denied the Lord and yet one is exalted and the other is abased; one is saved and the other is damned for all eternity; one is praised and the other condemned. And one Christ denier is gently exposing another Christ denier. Now here's the problem for twentieth century readers: we are so used to seeing Judas as a horrible villain (from hindsight), that we don't feel the tension that Luke is painting here. There is an incredible tension in this chapter. For one of the other disciples to give this speech would be one thing, but for Peter to give it must have been an irony to many readers and must have been incredibly hard for Peter. Our tendency is to allow shame to keep us from even associating with the people that we have betrayed. And that's one of the good differences between Peter and Judas. Judas's false repentance kept him from restoration, while Peter's true repentance drew him back to Christ and back to the other disciples.

And what I want to do before we dig deeply into the text is to try to paint the picture as the disciples first saw it. You see, the Scripture makes clear that prior to Christ's arrest, none of the disciples had any idea that Judas was not a godly man. He looked like a godly man; he talked like a godly man. He probably even felt like a godly man at times, though of course there was some hypocrisy right from the beginning since he was a petty thief. At the last Passover, Jesus said to them, **“Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.’ And they were exceedingly sorrowful and each of them began to say to Him, ‘Lord, is it I?’”** (Matt 26:21-22). Because they were products of grace, their first thought was not how bad someone else was (Oh yeah, that's probably the betrayer over there), but rather each one had such a concern about the weakness of their own heart, and knew their failings so well, that each of them feared that they might be the one to betray the Lord. With fear they said, “Is it I?” And just as those disciples asked that legitimate question, “Lord, is it I?” I think that we need to examine our hearts to see if we have a genuine or a counterfeit

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Christianity. Paul was so concerned for the Corinthians eternal welfare that he told them this: **“Examine yourselves *as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*”** (2 Corinthians 13:5)

When we are confronted with uncomfortable topics like this in the Bible, we tend to immediately retreat and refuse to wrestle with the issues that the Bible wants us to wrestle with. Our minds almost immediately go into gear to justify ourselves and to convince ourselves that we are OK; that we really are saved. We think, “You know, I’ve been faithful to the Lord for the most part. I have made sacrifices for the Lord. And look at the prayers that God has answered in my life. Surely God is with me. Surely I am saved.” But I hope to demonstrate this morning that the righteous deeds that Peter did are not the things that made him different from Judas, because Judas did many, many righteous deeds too. Nor was it the presence of sins in Judas’s life, because Peter had very similar sins. Peter denied Christ three times and swore that he did not know Jesus. That was taking the name of the Lord in vain, it was lying as well as denying the Lord. And Christ had made it very clear in Matthew 10:33, **“whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.”** This was a serious thing for Peter.

There were a lot of similarities between Peter and Judas. Both Peter and Judas lived in the fear of man; both sought the approval of others. Both showed some signs of hypocrisy. Both of them had their price for which they could be bought. For Judas it was a rather low sum of money (one month’s wages) and for Peter it was escape from getting caught by the ones who had imprisoned the Lord. But really, they both had their price. Both were tempted by Satan. In John 13:2 it says that the devil put the suggestion into Judas’ mind to betray Jesus. It didn’t come out of his own mind. And yet he was to blame for following the devil’s suggestion. But it was the devil that put words into Peter’s mouth to tempt Jesus not to go to the cross in Matthew 16. Peter would probably never forget the rebuke that Christ gave to him on that day. The text says, **“But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.’”** It was Satan who put those words into Peter’s mouth. And Luke 22 makes it clear that Peter’s later denial of the Lord was the work of Satan. **“And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail [get those words, “I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail. Apart from the**

grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we would all turn out like Judas. Our faith would fail. We must cry out to the Lord in humility, “Oh Lord. I know how weak I am. Please keep me from stumbling.” Anyway, he said “I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail”]; **and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.’ But he said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.’** [Here’s an unhealthy self-confidence.] **Then He said, ‘I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.’**” No, we dare not think that Judas was a greater sinner than Peter. That is not the issue that made one safe in the arms of Jesus and the other snatched into hell by the arms of the devil

And we might be tempted to think, “OK. It wasn’t the sins that made them different, but look at Peter’s godly character. He showed all kinds of evidences of grace.” They might say, “Certainly he failed, but he also showed tremendous courage to be willing to raise his sword against so many to defend Jesus. He cut off Malchus’ ear. He showed courage by following John to the high priests home to see what would happen to Jesus. He was a courageous man under ordinary circumstances.” But you know what? So was Judas. Judas had stuck with Jesus through thick and through thin. He was there when they attempted to throw Jesus off the cliff. Do you think those disciples weren’t a little nervous?? Judas was courageously there when the demoniac came running at them. Judas was there on many dangerous occasions. Listen to what John 6 says after a massive number of disciples left Jesus because they were offended with His teaching. **“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to go away?’ But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”** The twelve continued to follow Jesus even though it was not a popular thing to do. Could Judas have claimed to be faithful? Yes he could. He was loyal to Jesus. He stuck with Jesus through thick and through thin. Yet the next verse says, **“Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?’”** It was not courage to follow that made the difference. Judas was unsaved *despite* showing many of the same good qualities that the other disciples showed: courage, faithfulness, patience, and loyalty. Yes, they were counterfeits, but they were pretty good counterfeits.

When Jesus said in John 11:7, **“Let us go to Judea again.”** The disciples said, **“Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You**

**going there again?”** Jesus insists, and it’s Thomas, not Judas who resignedly says, **“Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”** They knew this was dangerous. Yet Judas was willing to risk that danger too. And keep in mind that it’s not for another two chapters that Satan puts into Judas’ mind the idea to betray Christ. He hasn’t even thought about betrayal at this point. Stealing money? Yes. But not betrayal.

Judas is a conundrum. That means he is a puzzle or perplexing. Both he and Peter preached the Gospel for three years. Judas was a preacher – and probably a good one, I may add. If he had preached false doctrine, he would have been found out quite early. Both Judas and Peter heard the Word preached by Christ. Both were friends of Christ, and even on the night of the betrayal, Jesus still calls Judas “friend.” He was a friend, and yet he was not saved. Psalm 41:9 says, **“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up *his* heel against me.”** You can be a friend of Jesus, and not be saved. Both witnessed the miracles of Christ, and according to Scripture, both Peter and Judas performed miracles. And I’ll have more to say about that in a moment. Both were given ample warning ahead of time that they would fail, and neither one listened. At least five times Jesus warned the disciples that one of them would betray him. After the other disciples begin one at a time to ask, “Is it I?” on that fateful night, Judas, perhaps out of pressure, asked the same question. **“Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, ‘Rabbi, is it I?’ He said to him, ‘You have said it.’”** What an opportunity to break down in tears and to repent, and seek restoration, but he did not. And before you get too hard on him, just think of the number of times you have been confronted with your sin and have blown it off.

And someone might grab onto that statement with hope and say, “Well, at least I have wept over some of my sins. That shows God’s grace doesn’t it? I can identify with Peter who wept over bitter tears his sin.” And my response is that you are not justified by your tears. There will be many tears in hell. Judas wept too. That’s not what made them different. You see, there are many false ideas about repentance that people have. In fact, when I put this on the web, I want to attach a classic treatment of evangelical repentance versus counterfeit repentance. It’s a marvelous essay by Calcohoun. This writer from the 17 and 1800’s outlines eight crucial differences between the two. The counterfeits that Satan produces of Christ’s graces are sometimes so good, that many, many people are fooled.

Some people think that repentance is merely a mental agreement that we have sinned. It’s an assent to the truth of God’s view of their sins. But

Judas came to agree that he had sinned against Jesus. He told the priests, **“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”** There’s a change of mind. Others say, “Well, in addition to intellectual agreement you have a change in emotions: a godly sorrow. But you know, counterfeit sorrow many times looks like godly sorrow. In fact, in Matthew 27:3 it uses the same word for remorse or repentance that is used in the Prodigal Son passage. It says, **“Judas... was remorseful.”** That’s the Greek word *metamellomai*, which is often translated as repent, and has the dictionary definition of to feel sorrow or to feel regrets. Yet 2 Corinthians 7:12 says that this too can be counterfeited. It says, **“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”** Others say, “But true repentance requires restitution or some other change in will.” That is true. And yet we see Judas giving at least the appearance of a change in the exercise of his will. He returns to the temple, confronts the chief priests with the evil of what has been done, and when they refuse to change the situation, he throws the thirty pieces of silver on the floor and leaves. Is that not in a sense a turning away from that sin? And yet he was not saved. He didn’t repent of his thievery or other sins he wasn’t caught on. He didn’t repent of his hidden heart sins. They didn’t grieve him. What grieved him was being *known* as a sinner. He had a social conscience that was governed more by what people thought than by what God thought. And what I want to do this morning is go through Acts 1:15-20 phrase by phrase and use this as a vehicle of self-examination.

## **I. Restoration was more important to Peter than saving face (1:15). Note some of the other differences between Peter’s and Judas’ repentance.**

Look first at Acts 1:15. **“And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples** [those are the operative words: “in the midst of the disciples”] **(altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said,**” The first difference that we notice between Peter and Judas is that for Peter, restoration was more important than saving face. In the Gospels Peter immediately runs back to Jesus. He freely admits his faults to the disciples. He is restored to fellowship. He depends upon grace to make him acceptable, not upon his degree of righteousness.

Now that is always an incredibly hard thing for the flesh to bear. It was too hard for Judas to bear. Certainly Judas returned to the *priests* and admitted to *them* that he had sinned. But that was not too hard on the flesh.

They already knew that he had sinned. It was fellow betrayers debating the wisdom of what they were doing. It wasn't exposing his pride nearly as much as returning to Jesus would have done. What he should have said was, "Jesus I have sinned against heaven and against you by betraying You. Please forgive me. I am not worthy even to be your servant, but shamed as I am, I plead your atonement to cover me." Or think of how hard it would have been to go back to the disciples. His mind would be thinking, "They will hate me. They will never accept me. I've done the worst thing that is possible to do. I've broken their friendship. I know that they are mad at me. But I will go and confess my sin to them and ask their forgiveness, even at the risk of being beat up, scorned and thrown out. I want to be restored to them." Man! That would be hard on the flesh. And you can see why Judas did not do it. Apart from grace, none of us want restoration when we have done something terrible against others. We are embarrassed to be around them. We just want to get rid of those terrible feelings of guilt.

You see, Judas hates the terrible feelings of guilt that he had, but the thought of facing the shame and the dishonor of telling Jesus that he had betrayed Him, or admitting to the disciples that he was the betrayer was even worse than those feelings of guilt. So here is the subtle difference between Judas and Peter. Judas was focused on getting rid of his bad feelings. He hoped that by returning to the priests that the plan would not go ahead and he could lose his bad feelings without having to say anything to Jesus and the disciples. They hopefully wouldn't be the wiser. When that plan failed, he had only one other set of options for removing the bad feelings: humble himself in front of others or commit suicide. And believe it or not, suicide for him was preferable to the shame of the cross of Christ.

I remember this very struggle that Judas had, occurring in my own soul during my last year of high school and for two years thereafter. And I've had other times that I look back and shake my head and wonder, "What is wrong with me that I had such a hard time admitting my sin!" And the answer is, that even as a pastor, my flesh rises up and prefers the easy way out. To confess to the congregation that I have sinned. OOOH! that's hard.

But my longest struggle was back when I was nineteen and for the two years following. The Spirit convicted me of two sins that I could not get out of my mind. The sins were a time I cheated on my finals in twelfth grade so that I could pass my math exam, and the second occurred a couple years before when I had been hungry in Ethiopia and had stolen some potatoes in boarding school. And I confessed those immediately to the Lord. I mean, the Lord knew, just like the priests knew about Judas's sin. I think we find it

much easier to confess our sins to God than to confess to others that we have wronged. And the longer I waited to confess my sins to others, the harder it became.

I went to Bible School and suffered in my conscience all semester long. It was too humiliating to admit to my parents, my boarding school teachers and then my government school that I had sinned. And I was concerned about what the Bible School would think. Maybe I would be expelled. And so I rationalized, “Lord, I have confessed this to you many times. Why do I have to confess it to them? They don’t even know that I did it. It’s just between you and me.” And the Holy Spirit wouldn’t let me buy that. Then I thought, “It’s better if the non-Christians don’t know because it will be a bad testimony that a Christian has cheated.” And the Spirit would respond, “So you think it’s a good testimony if you *pretend* to be righteous?” “Welllll!?” And I would have other rationalizations.

And then the other sin that I committed in a Christian School would come to my mind, and my rationalizations for that seemed to contradict my rationalizations for the public school. And I would try to put it out of my mind, but I couldn’t. Then I thought, “It’s only a potato that I stole from the boarding school. My parents paid good money for me to be fed anyway. The food was mine. I shouldn’t have to confess it.” And the Spirit would argue back, then why did you confess it to Me? You knew it was a sin, didn’t you?”

And the arguments went on and on until finally I wrote to the government school that I was a Christian and had been convicted by God that I had cheated; that this was a sin not only against them but against heaven, that I had shamed the name of Christ through my sin, and that I was willing to take my twelfth grade math class over again (here I was in College, but I was willing to take that math class over again), because I had cheated and needed to pay restitution. Etc.” I wrote a similar letter to the boarding school and sent a check for \$10 to cover the potato, restitution, plus interest. That was the most expensive potato I ever ate. But the moment I sent those letters, I not only felt the joy and relief of being right with God, but I suddenly realized what a stupid thing it was to hold out. I began to realize the irrationality of our flesh. We would rather die like Judas than to humble ourselves before man. OH, what a work of grace God has to do in our hearts!!!

And God’s grace was powerfully at work in Peter’s life to humble him and restore him. And I should point out that Jesus didn’t make it easy. His

purpose isn't to make us comfortable in our sin, but to make us hate the deceitfulness of sin. Because Peter had denied the Lord three times, in John 21 Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love Me." And in the Greek, this is very interesting. Jesus first asks, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you have agape love for Me more than these?" Agape love is God-given. It is the highest love; self-sacrificing love. And Christ was asking if Peter loved Him more than all the others because Peter had earlier insisted, "**Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble**" (Matt. 26:33). Peter, now recognizes his own weakness so much that he dares not claim agape love, let alone to claim to love Christ more than the others. Instead, he says, "You know that I have phileo love for you." Phileo love is affection, and so the margin says, "You know that I have affection for you." A second time Jesus says, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you have agape love for Me?" He wasn't asking, "Do you have agape love more than the others. Do even have agape love. Peter doesn't dare to claim that and says, "**You know that I have affection for You.**" Then verse 17 says, "**He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you have affection for Me?'**" And the text says, "**Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, 'Do you have affection for Me.'**" [he's grieved, not because Jesus says something three times, but because Jesus even questions whether he truly has affection for Him. "**And he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things; You know that I have affection for You.'**" And Jesus ends His discourse with the words, "Follow Me." Follow Me. Repentance is not about getting rid of guilt. It is about restoration to Jesus. It's about living at the foot of the cross once again. And when Peter later asks what will happen to John, Jesus says, "What is that to you? Follow Me." We must cling to Jesus.

That was a tough interview for Peter to be restored to fellowship. And some of you have tough interviews that you will need to go through (maybe even this very day) in order to be restored to fellowship the way that God desires. Not sweeping our sins under the carpet (as so many husbands and wives do) but true restoration. Do not take the easy way out. Do not minimize your sin. And do not fall into the counterfeit patterns that are so pervasive. And I would encourage you to read the article by Colcohou so that you can walk the path of grace rather than that of the flesh.

Only true repentance and faith (which are flip sides of the same coin) can enable you to stand up in the midst of the brethren like Peter did and admit your sins and still be able to have joy and to glory in the cross. Only true repentance could enable a person like Paul, who had killed how many Christians, perhaps even some of their relatives, to not worry about the favor or disfavor of man, but to glory in His acceptance by Christ. It is only by



grace that we can joyfully expose our sinfulness to the very people we want to be around and still find security in Jesus.

## **II. Though God is sovereign over everything, Peter does not blame any sin on circumstances or other providential events. It's out of the wicked heart that such sins arise. (1:16)**

Verse 16 goes on, “**Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas,**” This deals with the mystery of God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom. Both are true. Luke 22:22 says, “**And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!**” Jesus had to be betrayed; it was predestined that He be betrayed, yet Judas was still a free agent. He was responsible. He could not say, “I couldn’t help it. God forced me to betray Jesus.” No. Judas wanted to betray Jesus for those thirty pieces of silver. He freely did it, yet it was still determined. You see the same emphasis in Acts 2:23. Peter there says, “**Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;**” and then he calls upon them to repent. Why do they have to repent of their action if the crucifixion was determined before the foundation of the world? Because we must never pit God’s sovereignty against our responsibility.

And this is the second thing that we see in Peter. Though he fully recognizes God’s sovereignty, he never excuses his own sin or anyone else’s sin on sovereignty. If God’s grace is at work in our hearts, we will always own up to our own responsibility.

Now you may not think that you blame God for making you the way you are. But how many times have I heard the excuse in counseling, “I can’t help it. That’s just the way I am.” Or “That’s my personality. You’re asking me to be something I am not.” You are pawning the responsibility off of yourself. Or other times people will blame their sins on the circumstances that God has brought into their lives. It’s my wife. If you had to live with her, you would respond the same way. Or they will blame it on their upbringing, or their genetics. I can’t help my sexual desires. It’s the way I’m hard wired.” But Peter will have none of that. While God is sovereign, we must take full responsibility for our sins. Do not blame your environment, because that is blaming God’s providence. Do not blame your upbringing, because that is blaming God’s providence. Do not blame your genes, your

personality or anything else but your wicked heart, because out of the heart flows every kind of sin according to Jesus. So take full responsibility and repent.

### **III. Though Judas didn't arrest Jesus, he was an accomplice (1:16b). No matter how much others are at fault, we must own up to our own sin.**

Verse 16 goes on, “**who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;**” Notice that Judas didn't arrest Jesus: the high priests did. Judas was only a guide. He could have rationalized that he was not the one sinning. The high priests were. And besides, Jesus could get himself out of this fix just as easily as He got out of previous ones. But the truth of the matter is that an accomplice to a crime is guilty of the crime. You parents may not do the sins of your children, but when you seek to win their favor by overlooking their sins, or excusing their sins, you are as guilty as they are. Judas no doubt rationalized that he wasn't doing the arresting, so he wasn't as bad as they were. But sin is like a spider's web. It doesn't matter if you fly straight into the middle of the web (and get caught) or if only one tiny portion of one wing has been caught simply on the edge of the web, the spider has got you. And the only way out of that web is through the shame of the cross. It doesn't matter if it is 90% your spouses fault; you need to repent of your own part.

### **IV. Judas squandered incredible opportunity in order to avoid pain. The opportunity is mentioned in the phrase “for he was numbered with us...” (1:17). There is a huge cost that he did not calculate.**

Verse 17 says, **for he was numbered with us...** This speaks to me of the incredible opportunity that Judas squandered; He was one of the twelve. It's not just the evil that he did that is so sad, but also the opportunities that he squandered that make this so terrible. The Bible indicates that man will be judged not just by his sins, but also by his opportunities lost. Let me give you an example. Matthew 11:20-24 says,

**Matthew 11:20 Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent:**

**Matthew 11:21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.**

**Matthew 11:22** But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

**Matthew 11:23** And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

**Matthew 11:24** But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

Capernaum will have greater judgment than Sodom. Why? Because it had greater opportunities that it spurned. Judas will have greater judgment than Sodom. Why? We cannot say it was because he was more vile a sinner than the Sodomites. You could not get more vile than they had become. No. Judas was far better in lifestyle than the Sodomites. But he will be judged more than the Sodomites because he had more light.

America has been the land of opportunity. We have had incredible opportunities that we have squandered. And we will be judged more severely than Sodom – unless there is genuine repentance.

And I believe those of you in this church who are doing nothing with your Christianity will be judged far more severely than people from Billy Bob’s church down the road because you have squandered opportunities that God has cast before you. True repentance looks not just at the vile sins that everybody else notices, but grieves and weeps over lost opportunities that are hidden from the view of everyone else. These are the invisible sins of the heart that will grieve us just as much if we are really experiencing God’s grace.

## **V. Judas squandered incredible influence by giving up his share in ministry (1:17b). Again, there is a huge cost that Judas did not calculate.**

Judas also squandered incredible influence. Verse 17 says that Judas “**obtained a part in this ministry.**” It doesn’t say that he thought that he was engaging in ministry. No, he did indeed have part in ministry. And the Lord worked through him. Don’t think that the only basket that didn’t multiply loaves and fishes was the basket Judas was holding. No. Afterward, there were twelve baskets full to overflowing (Luke 9:17). God worked through Judas. Don’t think that when Luke 9 reports the disciples talking about the many other miracles they had done and the demons they had cast out that Judas was the only one left out. No, the text indicates they all did those miracles. In fact, Hebrews 6 indicates that people who have never been saved can see the Holy Spirit working through them, can have “**tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come.**” Tasting of the

powers of the age to come is experiencing miracles. And this has puzzled some Christians. How is it that unsaved people can do miracles in the church, can prophesy and do other things you would expect only believers to be able to do? And the answer is that God's grace frequently is experienced corporately by the church, and that where true believers are, even the non-believers benefit. And this is a warning not to mistake corporate grace for individual grace.

Let me give you an example. I have read the autobiography of Charles Templeton. He was once an incredible evangelist and over time became an atheist through small compromises here and there that eventually left him without any sense or sensibility. And he finally ended up writing books trying to disprove Christianity. By the way, the first doctrine to go was the doctrine of six-day creationism. And people might say, "Yeah, but there was probably no evidence of God's grace working through him anyway. He was a fake." Well, yeah. He was a fake. But he didn't know it at the time. And no one else did. *And* just like Judas, he had an incredible ministry. Tens of thousands of people were soundly converted through his ministry and are believers to this day. Many Christians were strengthened in their faith. God worked powerfully through him. Let me give you one example. And actually, at this stage in Templeton's life, he had already begun to question several doctrines, including whether God would heal anyone. But listen to this portion of his biography. Templeton says,

I had, when requested, prayed for the sick many times, never effectually. I never preached on faith healing, seldom referred to it and was publicly critical of evangelists who majored in it. I regarded it as peripheral and, in the hands of charlatans, dangerous.

Nevertheless, one Sunday afternoon, I went to one of those small boxlike frame houses common to Toronto's east end at the request of a woman who attended the church. Her infant daughter had been born deformed. The large muscle on the right side of the neck was attached to the left collarbone, binding the baby's head to the left. As I understood it, there was some conjunction of the muscle and the jugular vein that made it impossible to correct the problem surgically. Once a week the woman took the infant to the Hospital For Sick Children for muscular rehabilitation. The baby's head was repeatedly twisted to the right, to stretch the muscle so that, in later years, she would be able more or less to face the front. The mother was required to repeat the therapy for ten minutes each day despite the baby's screams. Finding it unendurable she importuned me to come and pray that the infant be healed.

I went reluctantly, feeling like a mountebank. The baby was in the bedroom in its crib. I put some olive oil on my fingers, kneeled with the mother, put my hands on

the infant and prayed. I had no expectation that the child would be healed. With the glib words on my tongue, I was thinking about the woman - about her pain, and about how disheartened she would be when the baby was unchanged and months of agonizing therapy lay ahead. At the close, we rose to our feet and returned to the living room. I was questing in my mind for sentiments with which to buoy up her courage and ease her disappointment. We sat for a few minutes, talking, I in a chair and she on the chesterfield opposite, I asked, "Wasn't the baby's head bound to the left?" The baby was looking to the right and then turned to face me. The woman [fainted], and as she began to slide to the floor, I caught the baby and placed it on the chesterfield. When the woman revived, she was near hysterics. I told her to report what had happened to the hospital.

Four years later, New World, a Canadian imitation of Life magazine, came to me looking for a story idea. They planned to do a feature in their Easter edition under the heading, "What My Faith Means To Me." I sent them to the woman and to the Sick Children's Hospital. They ran the story and a full-page picture of the mother and child, now a young girl and manifestly normal.

[Now keep in mind that he is writing this from the perspective of an atheist who now believes God didn't do this since there is no God. He has no explanation. He just reports it as a mysterious thing. He goes on.]

Not long afterwards, I encountered another instance of instantaneous healing. My aunt, Ada Poyntz, a graduate nurse and my mother's youngest sister, was terminally ill with what was described to me as stomach cancer. Exploratory surgery had discovered that the malignancy was inoperable. She suffered greatly from adhesions and was bedridden. There was little point in her remaining in hospital, and, in those days before medicare, the costs would have been prohibitive. She was sent home to live out the rest of her days with my mother.

Mother insisted that I come to the house and pray for Ada. I went again with reluctance and that sense of embarrassment I invariably felt when asked to pray for healing. I had investigated many claims of faith healing over the years and had never seen any instance that seemed to me authentic. I couldn't account for what had happened to the baby's neck but was by no means convinced that it was as a result of divine intervention.

I placed my hands on my aunt's body and began to pray. The moment was intensely emotional. My mother was praying and weeping. My aunt was gasping in an agony of hope, "Oh God! Please! Please God!" As I was praying, I felt something akin to an electrical charge flow through my arms and out my fingers. I remembered the incident in which the woman "suffering from an issue of blood" touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was healed. Jesus stopped and said, "Who touched me?" Peter remonstrated with him: "What do you mean, who touched you? There's a crowd pressing us, jostling us." "No," Jesus said, "somebody

touched me; I felt power go out of me!" I wondered if what I was feeling was what Jesus had spoken of.

Afterwards, there was the usual mutual encouragement, the "trying to have faith." When I returned home, the telephone was ringing. It was my aunt, who had not been out of bed for weeks. "Chuck," she said, half laughing, half in tears but far from hysteria, "I've been healed. I really have." Mother came on the phone. "It's absolutely incredible. She's been walking around. She's been up and down the stairs. Chuck, she's healed. There's no doubt about it."

There was no return of the malignancy. The adhesions ended. She outlived the rest of her brothers and died forty-two years later at the age of eighty-seven.

How do I account for these two instances of apparently instantaneous healing? I cannot. They certainly didn't happen because of my faith. Nor do I believe they resulted from divine intervention. Having investigated faith healing over many years I have no doubt that, occasionally, men and women are healed of actual illnesses. I am not speaking of those illnesses that are hysteric in nature, symptoms of an underlying psychological problem. Nor of those "healings" that are undoubtedly remissions; the temporary subsidence of symptoms or pain. Nor again, am I referring to the so-called healings seen on television when the ailing victim is anaesthetized by the intensity of the moment and becomes able, if only for a brief period, to bend a painful back or walk on a crippled limb.

I am opposed to the public healing services of contemporary evangelism. Occasionally, a form of cure may be effected, but the good done is minuscule compared to the harm. Television healing evangelism is a fraud. [And he's right on that point. But he goes on.] The "healers" are often simpletons or rogues or both, living off the avails of medical bunkum. They knowingly mislead, leaving behind them emotional wreckage and illnesses often worsened by neglect. Despite all this, I am convinced that what may loosely be called faith healing is an area of medicine with unrealized potential.

Now obviously, Templeton as an atheist tries to explain away these healings, but he knows he cannot. God's grace was working through him, not because he was a vehicle of grace, but because he was part of the corporate church that God favored with grace. So don't think that just because God has answered your prayers or done miracles through you that you are saved. Judas worked miracles too.

Templeton talks about many awesome experiences that he formerly thought were God ministering to his heart. He talked about how the Scriptures warmed his heart, and how meaningful prayer was to him. At one point, when he was at Princeton getting a degree he had an experience that many many people would interpret as a manifest work of

God's grace in their lives. Yet, from hindsight, he did not see it that way. He says,

in my second year, in imitation of Mohandas Gandhi—who remains one of the formative influences on my life—I decided to fast each Wednesday, eating nothing and drinking only water. Seven nights a week, in all kinds of weather I went walking on the golf course between the seminary and the Institute for Advanced Study, not to pray so much as to articulate the almost intolerable yearning I was feeling [and I just want to clarify that he had a yearning for God. He went on], some-times simply focusing all my faculties on the infinite; straining to grasp what theologians like to call the “mysterium tremendum.”

One night I went to the golf course rather late. I had attended a movie and something in the film had set to vibrating an obscure chord in my consciousness. Standing with my face to the heavens tears streaming, I heard [a] dog bark of[f] in the distance and, from somewhere, faintly, eerily, a baby crying. Suddenly I was caught up in a transport. It seemed that the whole of creation - trees, flowers, clouds, the skies, the very heavens, all of time and space and God Himself - was weeping. I knew somehow that they were weeping for mankind: for our obduracy, our hatreds, our ten thousand cruelties, our love of war and violence. And at the heart of this eternal sorrow I saw the shadow of a cross, with the silhouetted figure on it...weeping.

When I became conscious of my surroundings again, I was lying on the wet grass, convulsed by sobs. I had been outside myself and didn't know for how long. Later, I couldn't sleep and trembled as though with a fever at the thought that I had caught a glimpse through the veil.

For the next few weeks I sought to repeat the experience. It never recurred. I recognized it to be a mystical experience, and in the library pored through books on the subject. The literature is not extensive but I learned that what had happened to me was not unusual: it has been a commonplace at various times in the history of the church. More important, I learned that it was of no special significance. Mystical experience has added no insight to our knowledge of God or to Christian doctrine. Indeed, the experience is not uniquely religious: the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow could go into a transport at will merely by repeating his name aloud.

Woohhh! You can be so close to the kingdom and yet so far. I have read similar testimonies of preachers who have had awesome testimonies of God working in their lives; and members of churches that seemed to evidence genuine ministry of God through their lives, yet abandoned the faith and became atheists. Some Christians believe that such people lost their salvation. But Scripture affirms that if you are truly saved, you will never lose your salvation. **“being confident of this very thing, that He**

**who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.”** (Phil. 1:6). 1 John 2:19 says, **“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”** He is saying that if you leave the faith, you never had true faith in the first place. That’s 1 John 2:19. Rather than saying that such people as Judas and Charles Templeton lost their salvation, it is better to explain it that God’s power works corporately through the church. Why don’t you turn with me to Matthew 7:21-23. This is a passage that ties these concepts together. Matthew 7 beginning at verse 21.

**Matthew 7:21 ¶ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**

**Matthew 7:22 Many will say to Me in that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name,...**

[They actually think they prophesied, and Jesus, interestingly, doesn’t deny that they did. Saul prophesied. Balaam who was an unbeliever according to the New Testament also prophesied *by God’s Spirit*. So these will say, “have we not prophesied in Your name,...]

**cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?”**

[Again, notice that Jesus does not deny that they cast out demons or that they performed miracles. The inability of the sons of Sceva may come to your mind, but the sons of Sceva in Acts 19 couldn’t cast out demons because they weren’t part of the community of faith. They weren’t in the church. But because God honors the church, He will many times honor the prayers of the church, even if those prayers are offered by a Judas. But now notice Christ’s interpretation of all this in verse 23.]

**Matthew 7:23 And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”**

Notice that He doesn’t say, “I once knew you, but now that you’ve lost your salvation, I don’t know you any more. No. He says, “I never knew you.” They never were saved. Even though they were in the church, did miracles, prophesied, Jesus says that He never knew them. They weren’t his elect.

So if your only confidence of your salvation is that like Judas, you have shared in the ministry of the church, I would urge you to cast your hope upon the Lord alone and His cross alone.

**VI. Judas tries to avoid the money that is burning a hole in his hand, yet that money purchased a property for him.**



## **He tries to avoid the shame, yet this property becomes a memorial of far greater shame (1:18-19)**

Back to Acts 1, look at verse 18. “(Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity;”

That’s an interesting phrase. Judas didn’t want to purchase this field. Those silver coins were burning holes in his hand, so he threw them on the temple floor and left. But that blood money stuck to him like glue. Self-reformation never works.

Anyway, Matthew records *how* Judas purchased this field. It happened after his death. The priests, being self-righteous as they were, had scruples about taking the blood money and putting it into the temple. Their conscience allowed them to crucify Christ, but not to take blood money and put it into the temple. Straaaange, what our consciences can do. So they went out to buy a field with the money, and because they could not consider it their money, they bought it in Judas’s name. And putting the two passages together, here is what probably happened. When all their business was done, after the Sabbath they went out to buy a field. And in that potter’s field they saw Judas’s decomposed body. Because of how gross this was, the potter was quite happy to sell the property to the priests for 30 pieces of silver, and according to Matthew it became a graveyard for poor people. What a memorial to sin. His property became a graveyard. The wages of sin is death. But there’s more.

Though Luke leaves out the detail mentioned in Matthew, that Judas hung himself, it is implied in the fact that Judas fell from a height, and that he was ripe enough that he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. How would you like that as an epitaph on your tombstone? This guy not only made a big mess of his life, he made a big mess of his death, and made a big mess of the pavement.

Matthew says that he hung himself. Verse 18 adds that he fell down: “**and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. And it became know to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.**” It was such a gross death, that none of this could be hidden. All the neighbor’s were inquiring, and they all found out from the potter what had happened. The potter had to sign the title deed, but is mystified that priests are buying it in someone else’s name with someone else’s money, and that someone else is rotting in his field. And so the whole story spills out. The

priests have to admit that this was Judas' money, and that it was blood money that couldn't be used in the temple. Because it was purchased with blood money, it was named as Field of Blood.

Now here is the irony. Because the priests refused to take the money, and because they purchased this field, and because of the gross nature of his death, the very thing that Judas feared – public exposure and humiliation, came to pass. In fact, he was far more exposed and humiliated than if he had followed God's methods. It makes no sense to hide our sins. Samuel told Saul, **“Be sure your sins will find you out.”** Much better to humble yourself before the cross of Christ than to be exposed in this infinitely more shameful way. And we know from the rest of Scripture that hell is a place where shame is never ending. So why do we avoid temporary shame and risk eternal shame!? It makes no sense. Judas and Peter illustrate the truth that God humbles the proud but exalts and gives more grace to the humble.

## **VII. The wages of sin is death and desolation and loss (1:20)**

Verse 20 says, **“For it is written in the Book of Psalms: ‘Let his dwelling place be desolate, [ and it became desolate, because no one wants to live in a graveyard. “Let his dwelling place be desolate.”] And let no one live in it’; and, ‘Let another take his office.’”** And of course Matthias took his office. But this verse makes very clear that the wages of sin is death, desolation, and loss.

## **VIII. His home was hell because he never received the price that Jesus paid for heaven (1:25)**

But there is one last reference to Judas, and that is in verse 25: **“to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.”**

His own place was hell. You see, until we have been transferred out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light, fallen man's true home is hell. Judas's home was hell when he was a nice young boy. His home was hell when he was an amazing apostle. His home was hell when he died a wicked betrayer. There was no change in his home. It's not until a person sees his sins as God sees them – with loathing and grief, and repents of his sins and puts his faith in Jesus Christ, that he inherits a new place; a new home in heaven. And it is my sincere prayer for each of you, that God would save you from your sins by His sovereign grace; that He would make you willing to face the shame of repentance and usher you into the joy of a full and satisfying life in Christ like Peter had. Peter wasn't sinless, but he

knew the path of joy. It came from repentance from dead works and faith in what Jesus had done, and clinging to Jesus for the rest of His life.

## Conclusion

Let me end with the words of a poem by William Blaine of South Africa. He had fallen away from the Lord like Judas, but in God's mercy was restored. His whole poem is an incredible poem that tells the story of Judas, but I just want to read the very end of the poem.

*It may not be for silver,  
It may not be for gold;  
But still by tens of thousands  
Is this precious Saviour sold:  
Sold for a godless friendship,  
Sold for a selfish aim,  
Sold for a fleeting trifle,  
Sold for an empty name!*

*Sold in the mart of science!  
Sold in the seat of power!  
Sold at the shrine of fortune!  
Sold in pleasure's bower!  
Sold where the awful bargain  
None but God's eye can see;  
Then ponder my soul the question,  
"Shall He be sold by thee?"*

*Sold! O God, what a moment!  
Stifled is conscience' voice;  
Sold! And a weeping angel  
Records the awful choice;  
Sold! But the price of the Saviour  
To a living coal shall turn,  
With the pangs of remorse forever  
Deep in the soul to burn.*

No doubt some of you are still fighting something that God has convicted you on and you do not want to take the road of the cross. That something is the thirty pieces of silver that you are selling your Lord for. Actually, since God cannot be sold and bought, it is really your soul that you

are selling. And when you look at the pitiful price that we are willing to sell our souls for, it makes you realize how shriveled and small we really are. May God have mercy on our souls. May His grace subdue and conquer our flesh. And may God's grace take us through the valley of sorrow and weeping and into the liberty and joy of the sons of God. That's really His desire for you: not to rob you of joy, but to take you from slavery to sin and into that joy inexpressible and full of glory that Peter talks about. May He do so. Amen. Let's pray.

## Appendix

### Evangelical Repentance *Versus* Counterfeit Repentance

By John Colquhoun

*A Note About the Author:*

John Colquhoun was one of the greatest Scottish preachers and writers. He was born in 1748 and died in 1827, having completed almost 50 years of pastoral ministry. His written works include: *A Treatise on the Covenant of Grace, A Catechism for the Instruction and Direction of Young Communicants, A View of Saving Faith, A Collection of the Promises of the Gospel, A View of Evangelical Repentance, Spiritual Comfort*, and a collection of sermons entitled *Sermons, Chiefly on Doctrinal Subjects*.

It is a truth clearly revealed and often inculcated in Scripture that without repentance a man cannot attain eternal life in heaven. The most of men, therefore, who read and hear the Gospel admit that repentance is necessary to their future safety and felicity. But while they believe that it cannot be well with them except they repent, they resolve with a fatal precipitance to call something by this name which bears only a faint resemblance to it; and then they flatter themselves that this base counterfeit will not only be acceptable to God but will even recommend them to His favour. Persuading themselves that they have already repented, they compose themselves to sleep on the pillow of carnal security; and they will not believe that any of the dreadful threatenings denounced in Scripture against impenitent sinners belongs to them. Thus many ‘go down to the grave with a lie in their right hand.’ They obstinately refuse to be convinced of their fatal mistake till they begin to lift up their despairing eyes in torment. That my reader may not through ignorance deceive himself with a repentance which must be repented of, I shall endeavour to show him the difference between a true and a counterfeit repentance, as distinctly and plainly as I can, under the following particulars:

1. *False repentance flows from a counterfeit faith of the law as a covenant of works; but true repentance follows a true faith both of the law and of the gospel.*

False repentance arises from a counterfeit faith of the violated law in its covenant form. Hence it is often styled legal repentance, and the conviction of sin which excites it, legal conviction. It flows from that temporary faith of the commands and curses of the broken law, which a legalist, when his conscience is at any time alarmed, reluctantly exercises. When the holy law strikes his conscience, he is forced to believe that it requires from him

perfect obedience as the condition of life, and that its tremendous curse for innumerable instances of disobedience is pronounced against him.<sup>1</sup> The righteous law claims perfect obedience as due from him and condemns him for his disobedience. His awakened conscience concurs with the precept and curse of the law, so that he begins to be greatly alarmed. The only refuge from the curse of the law to which he has recourse in order to pacify his guilty conscience, to satisfy Divine justice, and to lay a foundation of hope, is resolutions, reformations, duties, and other self-righteous schemes. The defects of his endeavours and attainments create new fears; these fears excite new endeavours; and thus the legal penitent goes on, without attaining to the law of righteousness, because he ‘seeks it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.’<sup>2</sup> As he may at the same time have a temporary faith of the Gospel, he may pretend some regard to Christ in this his legal progress. He may hope that God, for the sake of Christ, will accept his repentance and forgive his sins. And what is this but a secret hope that the redemption of Jesus Christ will impart such merit to his tears, reformations, and works, as will make them effectual to atone for his sins, and to purchase the favour of God? He cannot trust that God will shew mercy to him, till, by his penitence and reformation, he recommend himself to His favour.

On the other hand, the characters of true repentance are directly opposite to those now mentioned. It follows a sincere, a spiritual faith, both of the law and of the Gospel. Whilst a true conviction of sin and misery flows from a spiritual belief of the law with application to oneself, a true sense of sin, from which genuine repentance springs, arises from a sincere faith, both of the law and of the gospel. It is the immediate consequence of a sincere faith of pardoning mercy. ‘There is forgiveness with thee,’ says the Psalmist, ‘that thou mayest be feared.’<sup>3</sup> Godly sorrow for sin, and turning from the love and practice of sin to the love and practice of holiness, flow, as was stated above, from reliance on the righteousness of Jesus Christ for all our title to pardon and sanctification, and from trusting in Him for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace. Hence it is called evangelical repentance. The acting of true faith produces, in order of nature, the exercise of this repentance. He who would repent acceptably must first believe in Christ that he may so repent.<sup>4</sup> He must believe that there is safety in entrusting his guilty soul to Christ before he can, with sincerity and good courage, turn from all sin to God in Him. He must be united to Christ by faith, as the branch to the vine, before he can bring forth such fruit as is meet for repentance. Accordingly, the true penitent approaches to a gracious God with deep convictions of his guilt and of his desert of eternal rejection from Him; but then, he comes

before a mercy-seat. He relies on the blood of Jesus Christ for purification from his innumerable sins; and from that he takes encouragement to mourn before the Lord, and to express himself in the language of the royal penitent, ‘Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.’ ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.’<sup>5</sup> That is the prospect which both encourages and invigorates his humble supplications for mercy and grace. That is it which embitters all his sins to him, which makes him loathe them and long earnestly for complete deliverance from the love and practice of them.

Here, the attentive reader cannot but discern the difference, nay contrariety, between a guilty flight from God, like that of Adam after his fall, and a humbling, self-condemning approach to His pardoning mercy, like that of the prodigal when returning to his father’s house; between slavish and proud endeavours to atone for our sins, and to make our peace with God by our own righteousness, and resorting solely to the blood of Christ for cleansing from all sin. Similarly he sees the difference between mourning for our own danger by sin, and mourning for our sins themselves as the basest injuries done to God and Christ, and to the mercy and love which were displayed to us in Christ. And again, he sees the difference between attempting a new life by the strength of our own resolutions and endeavours, and trusting only in the mercy of the Lord Jesus for sanctifying as well as for justifying grace.

2. *Counterfeit repentance proceeds only from a sense of danger and a dread of wrath; but true repentance is a sincere mourning for sin, a loathing of ourselves in our own sight for it, and an earnest desire of deliverance from the power and practice of it.*

In false repentance the sinner is most affected with the dreadful consequences of his transgression;<sup>6</sup> but in evangelical or true repentance the believer is chiefly affected with the malignity and odiousness of sin itself as contrary to the holy nature and law of God.<sup>7</sup>

In false repentance the conscience of the sinner is alarmed by a sense of his dreadful guilt and danger; and then it cannot but remonstrate loudly against those sins which threaten him with intolerable and eternal torment. Hence those terrors which are frequently found among awakened sinners under apprehensions of approaching death. At such times their innumerable sins stare them in the face, and their high aggravations are remembered with bitter remorse. Conscience draws up the indictment and brings home the

charge against them. The violated law condemns them without mercy. And what have they now in prospect? What but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation to devour them? Now, with what deep distress will they cry out and howl upon their beds because of the heinousness and demerit of their sins! With what amazement will they expect the tremendous outcome of their sinful course! How ready will they now be to make resolutions of beginning a humble, a circumspect, a holy life! Under this their terror, conscience like a flaming sword keeps them from their former course of impiety and sensuality.

And what is all this repentance, but the fear of the worm that never dies, and of the fire that shall never be quenched? Let conscience but be pacified, and the tempest of the troubled mind allayed, and these false penitents will return with the dog to his vomit,<sup>8</sup> until some new alarm revive their convictions of sin and danger, and with them, the same process of repentance. Thus many sin and repent, and repent and sin, all their lives. Or it may be, distress of conscience makes a deeper impression, and fixes such an abiding dread of some particular sins that a visible reformation appears. Yet in this case the sinner's lusts are only dammed up by his fears, and were the dam but broken down, they would immediately run again in, their former channel with increasing force. It is true, this legal terror is, in many of the elect, a preparative to evangelical repentance. Many true penitents were, sometime, in the same distressing circumstances and at first began from no better principle than self-love to flee from the wrath to come.

It was said that false repentance proceeds only from a sense of danger and a dread of impending wrath. The character of true repentance is the very reverse. Sin itself becomes the heaviest burden, and the object of the greatest abhorrence and dread, to the sincere penitent. As evangelical repentance flows from the faith of pardoning mercy, the fear of hell, though it may sometimes accompany godly sorrow for sin, yet forms no part of this repentance. Godly sorrow springs from an affecting and humbling sense of the dishonour and injury which the true penitent sees he has done to a gracious God by his transgression in the first Adam, by the sin of his nature, and the innumerable evils of his life. This is the grievance, this the distress, of every true penitent. His language runs like this: — 'I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.' 'Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.' 'Deliver me from all my transgressions.' 'Let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' 'Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken



hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me.’<sup>9</sup> Here we see that the sincere penitent mourns for and abhors all his lusts, whether of the flesh or of the mind, and longs to be completely delivered from them. He is willing that none should be spared, no, not even a right hand or a right eye.

How great and obvious, then, is the difference between being struck with dread, restrained by terror, or driven from a course of sinning by the lashes of an awakened conscience; between this, I say, and loathing ourselves in our own sight for our iniquities and abominations, and vehemently desiring grace to mortify our corruption that we may be freed from the power of sin! The former is merely the fruit of self-love which urges the soul to flee from danger; the latter is the exercise of a vital principle which separates the soul from sin, and engages the whole man in a persevering opposition to it.

3. *In false penitence the sinner is chiefly affected with his gross and open sins; whereas in true repentance, the believer is more deeply affected with the secret and darling sins which he formerly delighted to commit.*

In counterfeit repentance the sinner is affected chiefly with his gross and open abominations, and with the connection of endless punishment with them. It is the recollection of his gross and scandalous crimes that fills him with remorse and dread; and it is not so much his view of these abominations themselves that fills him with regret and distress, as his prospect of punishment for them both in time and in eternity. It is their connection with present reproach and with future torment that usually fills his mind with the keenest anguish. Such was the repentance of Cain. After his murder of his brother Abel, he said, ‘My punishment is greater than I can bear.’ or rather as in the margin, — ‘Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.’<sup>10</sup> He did not say, My iniquities, the innumerable sins of which I have hitherto been guilty; but, ‘my iniquity,’ the crime of murder only. Such also was the repentance of Judas the traitor. He said to the chief priests and elders, ‘I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.’<sup>11</sup> It was not for his covetousness, hypocrisy, and other innumerable sins that he appeared to feel remorse, but only for his having betrayed the innocent blood. It was for this most atrocious crime, and this only, together with the sure prospect of endless punishment, that he felt such anguish of mind as was insupportable; for ‘he went and hanged himself.’ Of the same character is the repentance of multitudes at this day.

On the other hand, in true repentance the believer is ordinarily most affected with a spiritual view of his secret evils; the sin of his nature in general, and the unbelief and legal temper of his heart in particular. And of all his actual transgressions, the remembrance of none usually affects him so deeply as that of his own iniquity, his constitution-sin, the sin which in times past most easily beset him, and most frequently enslaved him. He is affected with sorrow and self-loathing for all his actual sins; but it is a spiritual view of this sin that commonly fills him with the deepest abasement and the keenest contrition. And whilst, with holy abhorrence of all iniquity, he turns from it to God, he sets himself with peculiar vigilance and diligence against this sin.<sup>12</sup>

4. *Counterfeit penitence has no true connection with the pardon of sin in justification; but true repentance is a necessary consequence of that act of pardon.*

Legal repentance is not connected with the judicial pardon of sin; for it is the repentance of one who is under the curse of the law as a covenant of works, and therefore under the dominion of sin. It is the repentance of a man who is under the condemning sentence of the broken law, which is the strength of sin; and therefore it is far from being spiritually good and acceptable to God. It is the repentance of an unbeliever; and ‘without faith it is impossible to please God.’<sup>13</sup> In brief, it is the repentance of a man whose sins are not pardoned, and whose person is not accepted as righteous before God in justification. And as acceptance, according to the covenant of grace, must begin at the person, and then go on to his performances, so, that repentance which does not flow from justification is counterfeit: it has nothing in it that is spiritually good and acceptable to God.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, true repentance is a necessary fruit of pardon and acceptance as righteous in justification; and therefore the exercise of it is spiritually good and acceptable to the Lord. The believer is freely pardoned, and made accepted in the Beloved;<sup>15</sup> and therefore Divine acceptance proceeds from his person to his exercise of repentance. Because he himself is accepted as righteous, his repentance is accepted as sincere. It is a necessary consequence and evidence of God’s judicial pardon of sin in the act of justification; and it is an appointed mean of the renewed intimations of it, and also of fatherly pardon, or the removal of paternal chastisement for sin. ‘I have blotted out,’ says Jehovah, ‘as a thick cloud, thy transgressions,

and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.’<sup>16</sup> And again, ‘Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings;’<sup>17</sup> — I as a Father will forgive them, and restore your souls. Although the exercise of evangelical repentance is impossible under legal guilt, which tends to the destruction of the sinner, and binds him under the dominion of sin,<sup>18</sup> yet it frequently exists under that guilt which exposes the believer to God’s fatherly anger, which anger implies love to his person, and tends to his advancement in the love and practice of holiness.<sup>19</sup>

5. *False penitence commonly issues from discouragement and despondency, but true repentance from encouraging hope.*

Many legal penitents, indeed, by their external reformation do pacify their alarmed consciences, settle upon their lees, and cry, Peace, peace to their souls; and so, their discouragement and repentance both come to an end. But while their anxious concern remains, their desponding fear is the very life of it. Their innumerable and heinous crimes appear dreadful to their alarmed consciences, as they cannot but know that they frequently violate their promises of new and universal obedience. They are therefore afraid that God will never pardon and accept such perfidious rebels as they have been. And though they dare not neglect religious duties, yet they come with horror into the presence of the Lord, as into that of an inexorable judge, an infinite enemy. Thus they have nothing to keep them from sinking into absolute despair but their good resolutions and endeavours, which yet are too defective to be a ground of comfortable hope. Now what is all this but, with base ingratitude, to undervalue the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ, to limit the boundless grace and mercy of God, and implicitly to deny the truth of the blessed gospel? They flee from the mercy of God our Saviour, while they pretend to flee to it.

On the other hand, though the true penitent has a deeper sense of the atrociousness of his sins, and of the greatness of his guilt, than any false penitent can have, yet he dares not yield to despairing thoughts of redeeming mercy. He is enabled to trust in the mercy of God his Saviour; and his exercise of faith opens the door of hope, and therefore the door of repentance. It is granted that he may labour for a time under many discouraging fears, but these are his infirmity, not his repentance. He exercises a living hope, and that gives life and activity to every other grace, and to repentance in particular.

Here it may be observed that, though a fear and jealousy of one's own sincerity may be consistent with the exercise of true repentance, yet all doubts of the freeness of gospel-offers and of the faithfulness of gospel-promises, all fears of his not being elected, of his having sinned away the day of grace, or of his having sinned against the Holy Spirit, all apprehensions that his sins are so aggravated, so atrocious, as not to admit of pardoning mercy — these are inconsistent with, and destructive of the exercise of it. The evangelical penitent looks over the highest mountains that are raised before him — the greatness of his transgressions, the plagues of his heart, the temptations of Satan — to infinite mercy. Thither he will fly. In that he will hope, though his case seem ever so dark, and though every thing appear to turn against him. And the more lively his hope is, the more humbled and grieved he is for his iniquities, and the more vigorous his endeavours are after new obedience.

Since true repentance is a hatred of, and a departure from all sin, it must surely be an abhorrence of, and a flight from unbelief and despair, the greatest of all sins. It is not, therefore, sufficient for the true penitent to believe that God is infinitely gracious and merciful, that the righteousness of Christ is infinitely meritorious, that there is forgiveness with God for the worst of sinners, and that Christ with His righteousness and fulness is freely offered in the Gospel to sinners in common.

He must believe all this with application to himself. And in order to his approaching to God as a Father, in order to his being in love with the ways of God, and to his serving Him with cheerfulness and delight, he must likewise trust in the Lord Jesus for his whole salvation. This firm trust in the mercy of God his Saviour is not only requisite in order to the first exercise of true repentance, but the sincere penitent will invariably find, that when he at any time yields to a despondent frame, he is hereby rendered incapable of godly sorrow for sin, of delight in God, and of the spiritual performance of any duty. The sincere penitent should, indeed, be jealous and distrustful of himself, but he must not distrust the compassionate Saviour, nor despond, if he would maintain the exercise of evangelical repentance, or of any other spiritual grace.

The difference, then, between a false and a true repentance is as great as between desponding fear and encouraging hope; as between being affrighted by a sight of our sins from trusting in God, and from serving Him with delight, and our being allured by His infinite mercy to seek His face, to

expect forgiveness through the blood of His dear Son, and to serve Him with the dispositions of children.

6. *Counterfeit repentance springs from enmity to God and to His holy law, but true repentance from love to both.*

The grief and terror which legal penitents often feel arise from dreadful apprehensions of God and of His inflexible justice. They know that they have greatly provoked Him. They are afraid of His infinite wrath, and therefore are eager to obtain a covert from it. Previously it may be, they have had some pleasing apprehensions of God, while they considered Him as all mercy, and while, though yet living in their sins, they entertained a hope of pardon. But now that they have alarming apprehensions of His infinite holiness and justice, and because He appears an infinite enemy to them, they are contriving some way to make peace with Him; for they are afraid that, if the controversy proceed, it will issue in their eternal destruction. They resolve upon obedience to Him from the same motives from which slaves obey their tyrannical masters, even though the rule of their obedience is directly contrary to the inclination of their hearts. Were the penalty of the law taken away, their enmity to it would quickly appear. They would soon again with the same pleasure as formerly, embrace their beloved lusts.

The truth of this assertion is frequently witnessed in those who throw off their convictions and reformations together, and who, notwithstanding their appearance of religion, manifest by their sinful and sensual lives the reigning enmity of their hearts to God and His holy law. They still show themselves to be enemies in their minds by their wicked works.<sup>20</sup> As for their sorrow on account of their sins, such penitents are very sorry that God hates sin so exceedingly that He is resolved to punish it with the everlasting destruction of the impenitent sinner, and that He is able to execute this purpose, in spite of the strongest opposition. They are also extremely sorry, as was hinted above, that His law is so very strict, and that the punishment threatened for sin is so terribly severe; but they are far from being grieved in heart for the base, the ungrateful part they have acted, by sinning against a gracious God and violating His holy law.

The true penitent, on the contrary, mourns, not because the law is very strict or its penalty very severe; for he esteems the law to be holy, and the commandment to be holy, and just, and good. But he grieves that, though the law is spiritual, yet he is carnal, sold under sin. He mourns that his nature

has been so contrary to God, that his practice has been so opposite to His will, and that he makes no better progress in mortifying the deeds of the body of sin, and in regulating his affections by the Word of God. He breathes with the same earnestness after sanctification as after freedom from eternal wrath. He loves God and His holy law; and therefore he does not desire that the law should be bent to his corruptions, but that his heart and life should be fully subjected to the law as the rule of his duty. He longs for nothing so much as redemption from sin, proficiency in faith and holiness, and a life of communion with Christ, and with God in Him.

The difference, then, between a false penitent and a true one is very great. The former looks upon God with terror and aversion, but the latter mourns his distance from Him, and desires earnestly to be transformed into His likeness. The one still loves his sins in his heart, and mourns that there is a law to condemn, and justice to punish him for them; but the other hates all his iniquities without reserve, and because they are contrary to the holy nature and law of God, he is weary under the burden of them. The obedience of the former is by mere constraint, but the imperfections of the latter are such ground of continual humiliation to him as makes him constantly aspire after higher degrees of faith and holiness. The one finds no inward and abiding complacency in the service of God: the other accounts it his happiness, and takes more pleasure in spiritual obedience than in any thing else. In a word, the repentance of the former arises from enmity to God and to His holy law; but the repentance of the latter flows from faith working by love to God and His law.

*7. False repentance produces only a partial and external reformation, but true repentance is a total change of heart, and a universal turning from sin to God.*

As some particular gross iniquity commonly leads the way to that distress or terror which is the evidence of a legal and false repentance, so a reformation with respect to such sins too frequently wears off the impression, and gives rest to the troubled conscience without any further change; or at least, some darling lust will be retained, some right hand or right eye spared. If the false penitent be deterred from sins of commission, he will still live in the omission or careless performance of known duty; or if he be zealous for the duties respecting the worship of God, he will still live in acts of injustice, strife, and uncharitableness toward men. If he reveals some activity in contending for the truths of the Gospel, his heart will still cleave to the

world, and he will pursue it as the object of his chief desire and supreme delight. If he make conscience of refraining from every open sin, he yet little regards the sins of his heart, such as silent envy, secret pride, self-righteousness, self-preference, earthly-mindedness, malice, unbelief, or some other secret abominations. Whatever progress he may seem to make in religion, his heart is still estranged from the power of godliness. Like Ephraim, he is as ‘a cake not turned,’<sup>21</sup> neither dough nor bread; or like Laodicea, lukewarm, ‘neither cold nor hot.’<sup>22</sup> His mind is not changed with regard to sin. He does not sincerely grieve that ever he committed it, nor does he really wish it undone. He does not heartily abhor it, nor is he ever willing to be finally divorced from it.

The character of the true penitent is directly the reverse of this. He finds, indeed, as has already been observed, continual occasion to lament the great imperfections of his heart and life; and accordingly he relies for renewed pardon on the righteousness of Christ and on the promises of God. But though he has not already attained, neither is already perfect, yet he presses on towards perfection. He watches and strives against all the corruptions of his heart, and labours after increasing conformity to God, in all holy conversation and godliness.<sup>23</sup> He does not renounce one lust and retain another, nor content himself with devotional duties, in the neglect of strict honesty, and unfeigned benevolence; neither can he rest till this is his rejoicing, even the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, he has his conversation in the world. All the actings of his mind, as well as his external conduct, fall under his cognizance and inspection; and his daily exercise and desire are to approve himself to Him who knows his thoughts afar off. His reformation extends, not only to the devotion of the church, but to that of his family and his closet; not only to his conversation, but to his tempers and affections, and to the duties of every relation which he sustains among men. His repentance produces heavenly-mindedness, humility, meekness, charity, patience, forgiveness of injuries, and self-denial; and it is accompanied by all the other graces and fruits of the Holy Spirit. And in order to be satisfied as to the truth of his repentance, he examines the motives which prevail with him to turn from sin to God for he knows that the mean motives which rise no higher than himself and his own safety can never denominate him a true penitent.

The difference, then, between a false and a true repentance is exceedingly great. The former is only an external reformation, devoid of all spiritual

grace, but the latter is an internal change of the will and affections, as well as of the outward conduct, a change which is accompanied by all the graces and fruits of the blessed Spirit. The one aims at so much religion only as will keep the mind easy, and calm the tumults of an awakened conscience: the other aims at a holy, humble, and spiritual walk with God, and rests in no degree of conformity to Christ short of perfection.

8. *Once more, counterfeit repentance is only temporary, and it wears off with those convictions of conscience which have occasioned it; but true repentance is the continued exercise of the sincere believer.*

We have frequent instances of persons who for a while appear under the bitterest remorse for their sins, and yet afterwards wear off all their impressions, and return to the same course of impiety and sensuality which occasioned their distress and terror. They hereby declare to the world that their goodness, like that of Ephraim, was but as a morning cloud, and an early dew, which soon pass away. And beside these, there seem to be some who quiet their consciences, and speak peace to their souls, from their having been in distress and terror on account of their sins, from their reformation from certain gross immoralities, and from their formal course of duties. They have repented, they think, and therefore conclude that they are at peace with God; and they seem to have no great concern about either their former impieties or their present iniquities. They conclude that they are converted, and that their state is good and therefore they are secure and dwell at ease. They often think, and perhaps speak, loftily of their experiences. They are elated with joyful apprehensions of the safety of their state and of the goodness of their heart; but they have no humbling impressions of their sins, and no godly sorrow, either for the depravity of their natures, or the imperfection of their duties, or the multitude of their provocations.

Many, whilst under the stings of an awakened conscience, are driven to maintain a solemn watch over their hearts and their lives, to be afraid of every sin, and to be in appearance very conscientious, serious, and even zealous, in the performance of known duties. By this imaginary progress in religion they gradually wear out their convictions, and get over their legal terrors; and then their apparent watchfulness and tenderness of conscience are forgotten. They attend to their duties in a careless manner, with a trifling and remiss frame of soul, while the great concerns of an eternal world are but little in their thoughts. All their religion is reduced to a lifeless, a cold



form. They still maintain the form, but appear quite unconcerned about the power of godliness. Besides, false penitents commonly suffer themselves to be basely overcome by the fear of man. They begin seemingly to repent, but loving the praise of man, and not being able to endure the contempt and reviling of the profane for their professed attachment to Christ, they turn away from the holy commandment. The men with whom they are connected, or to whom they are related, or on whom they depend, must at all hazards be respected and pleased.

Evangelical repentance, on the contrary, is a lasting principle. The true penitent loathes and condemns himself daily. Every day he laments and abhors all the evils which he discovers both in his heart and in his life. He does not forget his former sins, nor become unconcerned about them, as soon as he attains peace of conscience and a joyful hope of his reconciliation to God. But the clearer his evidences of the Divine favour are, the more does he loathe and condemn himself for his iniquities, the more vile in his own sight does he appear, and the more aggravated and odious do his past sins appear to him. The faith and sense of pardoning mercy made Paul appear in his own eyes the chief of sinners. The true penitent continues not only to mourn and to abhor himself for his past abominations, but he always finds new cause for the exercise of repentance. He finds daily so much unbelief, legality, and earthly-mindedness in his heart; so much deadness, formality, and hypocrisy in his duties; and so much prevalence of evil inclinations, vain thoughts, inordinate affections, and of the sin which so easily besets him, that he cannot, while he is in this tabernacle, but groan being burdened.<sup>24</sup> Repentance, therefore, is the constant exercise of the true Christian as long as he is in this world. He will not leave off repenting till he perfectly leaves off sinning. He carries the exercise of repentance about with him as long as he carries about the body of sin.<sup>25</sup> Sin follows him whilst he is fleeing from it; often it overtakes him, and therefore he must often renew his flight. For conscience' sake he will forgo temporal advantages, and break through the ties even of sweetest friendship and of nearest kindred, sooner than be drawn back by either into his former neglect of duty. He will maintain a godly jealousy over all persons and things connected with him, lest any of them prove a hindrance to him in his course of new obedience.

Thus it is manifest that the difference between a false and a true repentance is as great as between the running of water in the paths, after a heavy shower, and the streams flowing continually from a living fountain. A false and legal repentance continues no longer than the legal terrors which

occasion it, whereas an evangelical repentance is a continued war against sin, until death sound this enemy's retreat. So much for the difference between a true and a counterfeit repentance.

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From what has now been stated, the reader may see the difference between true and counterfeit humiliation. Ahab humbled himself from a sense of the danger and a dread of the consequences of sin; but the sincere penitent is humbled from an affecting sense of the malignity, odiousness, and demerit of sin.<sup>26</sup> The former had not a true sense of sin, and therefore, under all his pretended humiliation, the pride of his heart retained its complete dominion over him; whereas the latter has a true sight and feeling of the evil and loathsomeness of sin, and therefore he lies low in the dust before God. As an evidence that the pride of his heart is mortified, he sees, abhors and bitterly bewails it. A slave may stoop for fear of the lash, but it is the disposition of a son to be affected with sorrow and self-abasement for any offence he has given to a kind father. The legal penitent may seem very humble under a sense of the evil which his sin has done to himself, whilst his heart is far from being suitably affected with the injury which it has done to the manifested glory of God. He will be deeply affected under an apprehension of God's terrible wrath, whilst his heart is far from being touched with His love.

If the true penitent does evil he takes the blame to himself, but if he does good he gives the praise to God. 'I laboured more abundantly than they all,' says our Apostle; 'yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.'<sup>27</sup> The false penitent, on the contrary, lays the blame of the evil that he does upon others and takes the praise of the good which he does to himself. He who is truly humbled, conscious that he has no righteousness of his own, flies to the mercy, and submits to the righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the sole ground of his justification. This is that distinguishing character of evangelical humiliation to which the legal penitent cannot produce the smallest claim. The former is made willing to receive the whole of Christ's salvation as an absolutely free gift, whereas the latter is disposed to receive only a part of it, and that upon the ground of his own repentance and faith.

Hence also we may discern what we are to understand by the sorrow of the world. 'Godly sorrow,' says the apostle Paul, 'worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh

death.’<sup>28</sup> How great is the difference between the sorrow of the evangelical and that of the legal penitent! The one is a sorrow according to God: the other is the sorrow of the world. The former works repentance unto life: the latter works death. Now what is the sorrow of the world? It is that legal sorrow, accompanied by horror of conscience, which the men of the world sometimes have and which arises from a dread of God as a vindictive Judge, ready to take vengeance on them for their crimes, and that, without any apprehension of His mercy in Christ. This is nothing but the beginning of eternal death, of inconceivable and endless anguish in the fire that shall never be quenched. It is also that impatient vexation which worldlings often feel for the loss of worldly things or for disappointment in the gratification of worldly lusts. Now this sorrow likewise works death, temporal and eternal death. It often brings diseases on the body which terminate in death; and sometimes, as in the case of Ahithophel and Judas, it makes men lay violent hands upon themselves. It works in them a dreadful apprehension of eternal death, and, if sovereign grace prevent not, issues in it. The sorrow of the world is indeed a killing sorrow. While it is prejudicial to the precious soul, it injures the body and hastens death. Reader, the more godly sorrow for sin you attain, the more shall you be elevated above worldly sorrow. The former is the antidote to the latter. And if you would advance in the exercise of godly sorrow, trust firmly in Jesus Christ for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace, and see that your grief on any worldly account always terminates in sorrow for sin.

From what has been said it is evident that a legal repentance is very far from being a true one. It is far from being spiritual and acceptable to the Lord; and therefore, a man may attain the highest degree of it and after all perish as Cain, Pharaoh, and Judas did. It fills, indeed, the conscience with trouble under the dread of God’s infinite wrath, but it leaves the heart under the dominion and love of sin. In the exercise of legal repentance, the sinner mourns for sin only as it has wounded his own soul; which shows that his remorse flows merely from a natural spring, and rises only to a natural height. But in the exercise of evangelical repentance, the believer mourns for sin as it has wounded his dear Redeemer, as it has pierced that heart which loves him, and spilled that blood which redeems him. This is an evidence that his sorrow for sin has its spring above nature, and that it rises to a supernatural height. Legal repentance springs only from nature and in its exercise rises no higher than depraved nature. True repentance, on the contrary, proceeds from the grace of Christ and in its exercise aims chiefly at the glory of Christ, and of God in Him. Ah, how blind must that sinner be

who mistakes a legal for an evangelical repentance, and who flatters himself that he is in a state of salvation merely because he exercises a natural and legal repentance!

In conclusion: It is evident from what has been stated, that great care is requisite for distinguishing well between true repentance and that which is legal and counterfeit. This is of immense importance, seeing that many who live and die impenitent sometimes appeared penitent, both in their own view and in that of others. True repentance, as already observed, is a change of mind, inclination, and affection, with respect to sin, to God and His law, to Christ and His gospel, and to the sinner himself. From this change proceed godly sorrow for sin, detestation of it, and turning from it to the love, service, and enjoyment of God in Christ. Without this supernatural change and its immediate effects, no other appearances, whether of legal terror, or of supposed humiliation, whilst all sin is not hated and forsaken, nor universal holiness loved and practised, are sincere or acceptable to God. A man may mourn bitterly for sin and yet not mourn spiritually for it. True mourning for sin is more for the evil that is in it than for the evil which comes by it; more because it dishonours God and wounds Christ and grieves the Holy Spirit, and deprives the soul of the image of God, than because it exposes the soul to eternal punishment. A man may also hate sin and yet be far from exercising true repentance. He may abhor iniquity more in others than in himself, whereas the true penitent hates sin more in himself than in any other.

A man may abhor sin more for the shame which attends it than for the malignity and odiousness which are in it; and he may hate one sin because it is contrary to another which he loves dearly. The sincere penitent, on the contrary, hates all sin as sin, and abhors it chiefly for the evil that is in it. A man may even forsake most of his transgressions without exercising true repentance. If he forsake open, and yet retain secret sins, or if he leave sin and yet continue to love it, or if he let one sin go in order to hold another the faster, or if he forsake sin, but not as sin, he is not a true penitent. He who forsakes any sin as sin, or because it is sin, relinquishes all sin. The sincere penitent forsakes all iniquity from right principles, by right motives, in a right manner, and to a right end. Let every man take heed, then, that he do not impose upon himself by mistaking a false for a true repentance. And if he begin to suspect that his repentance is legal and counterfeit, let him without delay trust cordially in Jesus Christ for grace to exercise evangelical repentance.

## Notes

1. Gal. 3. 10
2. Rom. 9. 31, 32
3. Psa. 130.4
4. Heb. 11. 6; Acts 11. 21
5. Psa. 51. 2, 10
6. Isa. 59. 9-12
7. Luke 15. 21
8. 2 Pet. 2. 22
9. Psa. 51. 3; 38. 4; 119. 133; 40. 12-13
10. Gen. 4. 13
11. Matt. 27. 4
12. Psa. 51. 5-7; Rom. 7. 23, 24; Heb. 12. 1
13. Heb. 11. 6
14. Acts 2. 37; Rom. 7. 8-13
15. Eph. 1.6
16. Isa. 44. 22
17. Jer. 3.22
18. 1 Cor. 15. 56; Rom. 7. 6, 8
19. Jer. 31. 18-20; Heb. 12. 6-11; Rev. 3. 19
20. Col. 1. 21
21. Hos. 7. 8
22. Rev. 3. 15
23. The emperor Sigismund having, in a sore fit of sickness, made fair promises of amendment of life, asked Theodoric, Archbishop of Cologne how he might know whether his repentance was sincere. The Archbishop replied, 'If you are as careful to perform in your health, as you are forward to promise in your sickness, you may safely draw that inference.'
24. 2 Cor. 5.4
25. Rom. 7. 24
26. Job 42. 5, 6
27. 1 Cor. 15. 10
28. 2 Cor. 2. 10

## **Peter & Judas**

### **Acts 1:15-20**

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 8-21-2011

Introduction: How Peter and Judas were similar though different

- I. Restoration was more important to Peter than saving face (1:15). Note some of the other differences between Peter's and Judas' repentance.
- II. Though God is sovereign over everything, Peter does not blame any sin on circumstances or other providential events. It's out of the wicked heart that such sins arise. (1:16)
- III. Though Judas didn't arrest Jesus, he was an accomplice (1:16b). No matter how much others are at fault, we must own up to our own sin.
- IV. Judas squandered incredible opportunity in order to avoid pain. The opportunity is mentioned in the phrase "for he was numbered with us..." (1:17). There is a huge cost that he did not calculate.
- V. Judas squandered incredible influence by giving up his share in ministry (1:17b). Again, there is a huge cost that Judas did not calculate.
- VI. Judas tries to avoid the money that is burning a hole in his hand, yet that money purchased a property for him. He tries to avoid the shame, yet this property becomes a memorial of far greater shame (1:18-19)
- VII. The wages of sin is death and desolation and loss (1:20)
- VIII. His home was hell because he never received the price that Jesus paid for heaven (1:25)

Conclusion - poem by William Blaine

Peter shows the way of the cross and the valley of shameful repentance to be the true path to that "joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1Pet. 1:8).