

Freedom FOCUS

NEWSLETTER

“...to turn them
from darkness
to light...”

Winter 2011

www.indianabcc.com

Walking in Christ: Surrendering to God with Genuine Repentance

“**N**ow after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’” (Mark 1:14-15)

Throughout the New Testament, we find repeatedly the command to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. But what is repentance really about? Consider the following statements:

- Repentance is far more than a change in thinking; it is a change of heart.
- Repentance means to say yes to God and no to sin. (1 John 1:7-9)
- Repentance always leads to change of behavior. No true change comes without it.
- Repentance is a work of God in the human heart. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
- Repentance comes about because of God’s goodness. (Romans 2:4)

Repentance is God’s way of addressing sin in our lives. But all too often, we can deceive ourselves and fail to confront our sin. One of these deceptions is **denial**, a conscious or subconscious refusal to face the truth (1 John 1:10). Denial can be a manifestation of pride in our lives, leading to guilt and an attempt to cover up our guilt with more sinful behaviors. Other self-deceptions include **projection** (blaming others), **rationalization** (making excuses for poor behavior), and **condemnation**, (feeling hopeless to change one’s behavior).

How would God have us respond to our sin? God’s design for His people is a lifestyle of fellowship, confession, openness, and honesty. While covering up our sins leads to death, acknowledging sinful behavior leads to fellowship with God and others. (See Romans 6:14-16)

As we seek the Lord in dealing with our sin, it is important that we understand the difference between conviction and condemnation. **Condemnation** causes a person to feel shame, to withdraw and hide, to feel hopeless and fail to look to Christ. Satan uses condemnation; he is called the “accuser



of the brethren” in Revelation 12. **Conviction**, on the other hand, is a work of the Holy Spirit to help us acknowledge our sin. The Holy Spirit’s work of conviction brings us to Christ for confession of sin and leads to hope.

Not all sorrow indicates true repentance. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Paul differentiates between true and false repentance. “*Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*”

Worldly sorrow produces death. It is an unsanctified remorse with no redemptive capability in a person’s life. It causes a person to get angry and react in pride when caught in his sin. He is more concerned with the bad circumstances coming into his life than sinning against God. Worldly sorrow leads to shame, depression, self-pity, bitterness, hopelessness, and even thoughts of wanting to die.

Godly sorrow—sorrow that is according to the will of God and produced by the Holy Spirit—brings life. True repentance cannot occur apart from a genuine sorrow over one’s sin. Genuine repentance belongs to the realm of salvation; it proves a person’s salvation. Unbelievers repent of their sin initially when they are saved, and then as believers repent continually to keep the joy and blessing of their relationship to God.

Indy Area Gathering



Hosted by
Deeper Walk
International

Deeper Walk International, one of our ministry friends led by Dr. Marcus Warner, is hosting a special gathering to prepare for the 2012 biennial conference. Rev. Jeff Pokone will also be sharing how the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center can become involved in your local church or ministry. You are invited to join us for coffee and bagels while we discuss plans for the conference and talk about ways to reach the Indianapolis area with the message of freedom and maturity.

**Saturday, March 19
9:30am-noon**

**Lifepointe Community
Church
12770 Hamilton
Crossing Blvd
Carmel, IN 46032**

For more information or to RSVP, contact the IBCC office at 317-585-1845 or Deeper Walk at 877-467-4222.

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Walking in Christ: Surrendering to God with Genuine Repentance, *cont.*

In 2 Corinthians 7:11, Paul describes what true repentance looks like in a person's life. *"For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."* Let's take a closer look at each of these aspects of repentance:

- **Diligence:** The repentant person eagerly and aggressively pursues righteousness. This attitude ends indifference to sin and complacency about evil.
- **Clearing of yourselves:** This refers to a desire to clear one's name by doing whatever it takes to restore trust and confidence.
- **Indignation:** This refers to righteous indignation and holy anger. Genuine repentance leads to anger over one's sin and the displeasure it has brought on the Lord's name and His people.
- **Vehement desire:** This can be translated "yearning" or "longing for" and refers to the desire of the repentant person to restore the relationship of the one he has sinned against.

- **Zeal:** This refers to loving someone or something so much that one hates anyone or anything that harms the object of his love.
- **Vindication:** "Avenging of wrong" refers to the desire to see justice done. The repentant person no longer tries to protect himself—he wants to see the sin avenged no matter what it would cost him.
- **To be clear in this matter:** The essence of repentance is an aggressive pursuit of holiness. The Greek word for *clear* means "pure" or "holy." The Corinthians demonstrated the integrity of their repentance by their purity.

How are you dealing with sin in your life? Are you learning to surrender to God with genuine repentance? Ask the Lord to examine your heart and reveal to you any ways you are failing to confront your sin. Ask Him to give you a heart that yearns after Him and hates anything that gets in the way of your love relationship with Christ. Trust Him to bring the freedom, joy, and intimacy that are the fruits of true repentance.

This message from the Walking in Christ series, entitled *Surrendering to God with Genuine Repentance*, will soon be available for download at www.indianabcc.com.

The Generational Effects of the IBCC Ministry

A devotional shared by an IBCC board member at the November 2010 board meeting



One of the most well-known stories Jesus told is the parable of the prodigal son, found in Luke 15:11-23. This parable focuses on the relationship between a father and a son. Through sin their relationship is broken, resulting in great pain and devastation. However, healing and restoration are found as the father reaches out to the son from a heart of love.

Throughout the pages of Scripture, God reveals His heart for the father-son relationship. The story of the prodigal son is just one example. Genesis 22 highlights the close relationship between Abraham and his son Isaac. The Proverbs are full of instructions and insights regarding the father-son relationship. In Malachi 4:5-6, God warns that an absence of relationship between fathers and sons will bring a curse upon the land.

The gospels repeatedly speak of the relationship between God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Furthermore, God adopts those who believe in Jesus Christ as His children, inviting them to call Him Father. Clearly the father-son relationship is important in God's eyes.

Unfortunately, many father-son relationships are suffering greatly in our culture today. This is because as the leader of his home, a father can only effectively lead as far as he has been himself. If a father has wounds or strongholds in his life, he will be fighting these wounds. As a result, he is likely to wound his son or daughter instead of being a loving, firm, wise, and kind father. He may inflict wounds by attacking, withdrawing, or some combination of the two. In any case,

when he is fighting these wounds, he cannot impart wisdom and instruction or be a godly father.

At IBCC, one of our purposes is to help fathers find freedom from the strongholds in their lives. As a father finds freedom from strongholds, his heart is opened to be all Christ wants him to be. He can then live from a heart that receives and gives love and life to his children. When a father is capable of loving and not wounding his kids, Satan's work of generational transmission of wounds in a family is thwarted.

This is why the work of IBCC is so important—because it has a secondary effect on the children and grandchildren of the clients by thwarting Satan's work of carrying on multi-generational wounding. In addition, it allows the modeling of a true love-based (vs. conflict-based) family operation. By seeing this love-based operation in their parents' lives, the children now have a pattern that they can pass on to their children. But it all begins with God's working in the hearts of fathers, as He first turns their hearts to their children.

Can you imagine a culture where family love is present in multiple generations? How different that would be from our situation today, where a 50% divorce rate, single-parent families, and same-sex marriages all distort God's design. But to remove the love-killing strongholds in a culture, you have to start somewhere. IBCC is, by God's ordaining, that starting place for many people. May they continue to be that in the future not only for the clients' sakes, but also for the benefit of their children and children's children to the glory of God. It is this benefit to the children and children's children that is the important generational effect of IBCC.