



Repentance

“IF YOU HAVE SINNED, DO NOT LIE DOWN WITHOUT REPENTANCE; FOR THE WANT OF REPENTANCE AFTER ONE HAS SINNED MAKES THE HEART YET HARDER AND HARDER”
-JOHN BUNYAN



⁴Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. ⁵Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. REV. 2: 4

Revelation 2 and 3 record a message to several churches. It is “repent!”

Repentance means to change directions, to change the mind.

It is difficult to repent because it involves change. We must change our thinking and behavior. Perhaps it is time for an overall evaluation of our church. Are we thinking biblically? Does our worship bring glory to Christ? Are our ministries and activities led by the Holy Spirit?

What are our beliefs, values and behavior as a church? Our behavior comes from our values and our values come from our beliefs. Do our beliefs come from Scripture?

Some Biblical examples of awakening and revival:

- Samuel gathered all of Israel to Mizpah. (1 Samuel 7) He interceded on their behalf. He led the Israelites in fasting, confession and repentance. They returned to serve only the Lord and were spared from the Philistines.
- After being held captive for 70 years the Israelites returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. They gathered as “one man” in Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple. Ezra, a devoted scholar of the Word of God taught them the law. They confessed their sins, put away their idols and their foreign wives and repented. They experienced a celebratory time of praising, singing, giving and working. This awakening was all to the glory of the Lord God.

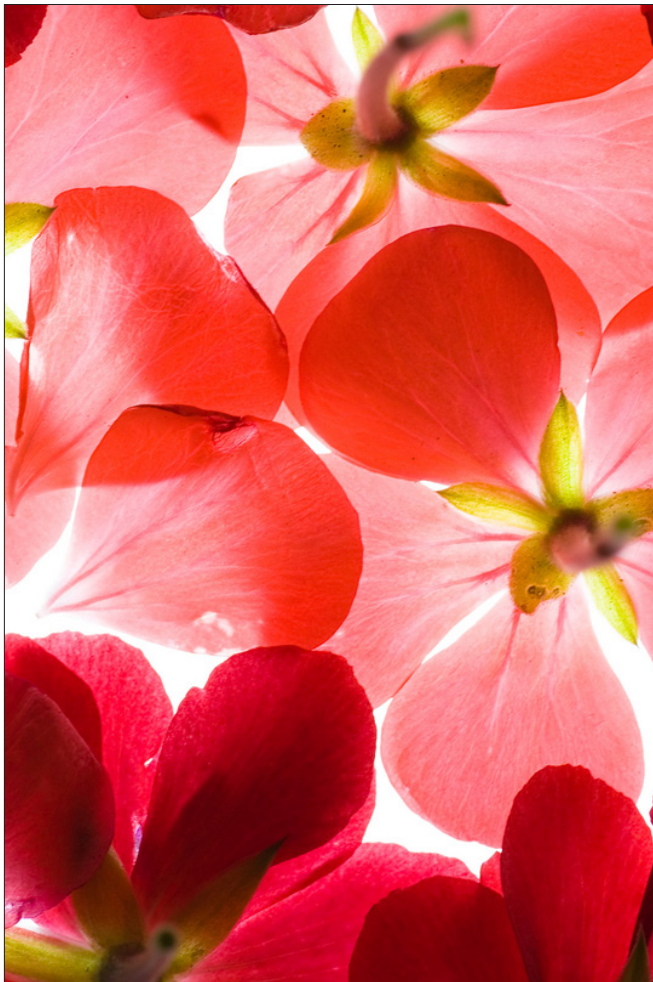
“WE WILL HAVE
TO REPENT IN THIS
GENERATION NOT MERELY
FOR THE VITRIOLIC WORDS
AND ACTIONS OF THE BAD
PEOPLE, BUT FOR THE
APPALLING SILENCE OF
THE GOOD PEOPLE.”

-MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

- Nineveh experienced a great revival through the preaching of Jonah. Even though he refused, acquiesced, and then pouted about his assignment from God. In spite of the messenger, the message was received and the people of Nineveh became people of the One True God.
- The greatest awakening was Pentecost. After Jesus' resurrection, He appeared to the disciples and told them to wait in Jerusalem. For ten days they prayed. The Holy Spirit came upon them and they were transformed people. They were unified in mind and spirit, praising God, worshipping and sharing the powerful story of Jesus Christ. They prayed, taught, preached, gave, healed and many unbelievers came to know the Son of God. The gospel went forth to all the earth....and to us today. Praise God!

PRAYER

God of all grace, we beseech you to have mercy upon our church. Holy Spirit speak to our soul. Give us courage to repent. Grant us staying power for the new way. As a congregation, keep our eyes focused on you, Jesus. In Your Holy Name we pray, Amen.



Practice:

- Study through the Biblical examples listed above. How did they repent?
- As a part of the body, what do you need to change to participate in repentance?