

Prayers of REPENTANCE

By Sandra Higley

Years ago, I found myself trapped in a continuous cycle of sin and confession. Every night I cried myself to sleep, sorrowful at my weakness. I confessed my sin to God, agreeing with Him that what I was doing was wrong. Every morning I woke, forgiven and full of His mercy, only to commit the same sin again at the first opportunity.

After a year of this rebounding pattern, I came to the end of my rope—sick of my sin and desperate for God’s help to overcome it. His grace enabled me to take drastic measures to remove every element of temptation from my life. He taught me how to move beyond confession (agreeing with Him about my sin) and into repentance (turning away from sin). The cycle was broken.

Hosea makes a distinction between “wailing upon [our] beds” and truly crying out to God (7:14). We may be consumed with tears of self-pity and sorrow over the consequences of our sin or the situations in life that we think drove us to it. But a true cry for repentance moves us beyond regret and compels us to do away with the sin. On the heels of this repentance, God promises times of refreshing (Acts 3:19).

GOD’S PROVISION

Lord, thank You for Your kindness. I know that’s what makes me even want to repent. Open my eyes to see just how kind and gracious You are to me. (Ro. 2:4)

Father, help me to understand the truth about my situation. Grant me repentance, which I know is a gift from You. Wake me up, Lord! Help me see where my mind, will, and emotions are being held captive by the enemy. (2 Tim. 2:25-26)

I call on Your name, Lord Jesus—it is the power to save. I lay hold of every benefit of Your blood: forgiveness, healing, full payment for sins, sanctification, and a clean conscience. May I never trample on what You did for me, or treat Your blood as unholy, or insult Your grace by deliberate acts of sin. (Acts 2:21; Ps. 103:2-3; Is. 53:5; Heb. 10:22,26-29)

Thank You for Your longsuffering, Lord. Thank You for Your willingness to see me come to repentance. Thank You for Your arms of forgiveness, open to and joyful over every prodigal heart. (2 Pet. 3:9; Lk 15:10-32)

MY NEED

Lord, I’ve “wailed on my bed” about my choices for a long time—but I know it hasn’t been true repentance. Make me sick of my sin of _____, not just its consequences. Grant me a godly sorrow that leads to repentance and leaves no regrets. (Hos. 7:14; 2 Cor. 7:9-10)

Holy Spirit, thank You that You are with me to convict me of my sin. Forgive me for the ways I’ve ignored Your voice and quenched and grieved You. I reject condemnation from the enemy, but I embrace Your conviction. (Jn 16:8; Eph. 4:30; 1 Th. 5:19; Ro. 8:1-2)

I just can’t stand it, Lord—every word I speak is tainted with this world! I’m completely unraveled in Your presence. Touch my lips with Your purging fire. Let me only speak words that bless and edify. (Is. 6:5; Eph. 4:29)

Holy God, I repent in earnest of my lukewarm state of existence. I’ve gone on for a long time in self-sufficiency, thinking I’m doing just fine. Give me eyes to see that I am utterly pitiful—poor, blind, and naked. (Rev. 3:16-19)

Lord God, I confess that the sins of my fathers and previous generations have given Satan access into my life. But I am not obliged to continue these sin patterns. Because I have died with Christ, I am free to make the right choices, and I am free from sin. I choose to stop _____ and turn completely in the other direction! (Ex. 20:5; Eph. 4:27; Ro. 6:6-7,18)

Merciful Lord, Your undying love and incredible compassion are my only hope. I know that my sins of _____ are against You and You only. I know that You delight in seeing me come to a place of brokenness. Grant me a broken, willing spirit and a contrite heart so I can offer it to You. (Ps. 51:1-4,12,17).

Lord, only You know how truly wicked my heart is—I can’t even begin to comprehend it. I’m going to keep on seeking You until You shower righteousness on me. Replace my heart of stone with a heart of flesh that beats hard after You. (Jer. 17:9; Hos. 10:12; Ezk. 36:25-27)

Most gracious God, give me a balanced perspective on who You are. Sometimes I’ve held on tightly to Your grace, but ignored the fact that You are a consuming fire. I know that the vastness of Your forgiveness does not reduce Your holiness. Help me to fear You in a way that leads to wisdom. Help me grasp the depth of Your love for me. (Dt. 4:24; 1 Pet. 1:16; Ps. 111:10; Eph. 3:17-19)

Create in me a clean heart, O God. I long for renewal and for the joy of your salvation to be restored to me. Thank You for restoring my soul and for guiding me into paths of righteousness so that Your name is exalted. Thank You for your gracious promise to make me strong, firm, and steadfast. Let the times of refreshing come, Lord. (Ps. 51:10, 12; 23:3; 1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 3:19)

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