



THE WALK OF REPENTANCE

A 24-Week Guide to
Personal Transformation

Steve Gallagher

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The Walk of Repentance

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Pure Life Ministries study on *The Walk of Repentance*, a study about repentance: what it is, what kind of behavior and attitude we must repent of, and what it brings about—victory, abiding joy, and inner peace. But repentance isn't something you can just acquire information about and then go do it. God must bring repentance about in your heart.

The one thing most believers in America don't need more of is information *about* Christianity. We know more about it than any people who have ever lived. Our problem isn't a lack of knowledge; our problem is a lack of *living* it. This study has not been formulated to give a person more "head knowledge." The idea of it is to help the Word of God take root in your heart so that you can experience that true repentance.

As you go through the program, you will find that you will get out of it what you put into it. If you simply read it and quickly answer the questions, I'm afraid you will simply end up with more head knowledge. But if you will prayerfully take your time through each lesson, I know that God will do something wonderful in your life.

As you answer the questions, please feel free to expand your answers on another piece of paper (you might wish to keep a separate binder for your answers). Occasionally you will be asked to look a word up in a *Strong's Concordance*. If you don't own one, we would strongly urge you to get one. You will find it to be a tremendous tool in studying the Bible. But we would also encourage you—in addition to using the Strong's—to purchase a *Vine's Expository Dictionary*. You will find that it too is an invaluable tool in studying the meanings behind words. I should also mention that I use a New American Standard Bible. Occasionally you may need access to one.

The Lessons

Each week of this curriculum has a theme, with a different Bible study each day. For instance, Week Eleven is entitled, *Speaking Truth*. On Monday, you will study "delusion." On Tuesday, you will study

"being truthful." On Wednesday, you will study "being deceitful." On Thursday, you will study "using flattery." And on Friday, you will study "gossip." All the studies combine to bring out realities about the need for truthfulness in our lives.

Each day you will have different types of studies. One day you may study one specific portion of Scripture, pulling out key truths from that section. Another day you may have to make a list of facts that are evident in another portion of Scripture. Still another day you may have to look up a word in the *Strong's* or *Vine's* and give the Greek or Hebrew meanings of the word. But one of the primary study methods you will be asked to use here will be to look up verses and write what you learn about that day's subject.

Let's say that the day's lesson is about "judgment." One of the verses you are asked to look up is I Corinthians 3:12-13. It says:

Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

Your assignment is to read the passage and tell what you learn about it. The answer many would give to this verse would be something like this:

We will be judged by the kind of work we do. That which is good—gold, silver, & precious stones will remain and we will get a reward for it. That which wasn't good—wood, hay & straw—will be burned up. The fire of the Holy Spirit will burn away the work that isn't done with the right heart and will show what it was really made of.

What you have here is a sort of commentary on what the verse says. In essence, the person has just rewritten the passage; sort of summed up the meaning

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of it. It is apparent that he hasn't prayed over the Scripture and sought God about its meaning *for his life*. The answer he has given is somewhat shallow. When you do the studies, spend a few minutes in prayer before you study it. Ask God to show you what He wants you to get out of it. Remember one thing: *He has something special for you every day in His Word!* Come to expect it!

After praying about it, chew on the words for a few minutes. "If any man builds...builds...what does building have to do with my judgment? What am I building? OK, I see from the previous verse that the foundation for this building is Jesus Christ, but what am I building? Oh! What about that passage in Matthew 7 where Jesus tells about the man who built his house on the rock and the one who built his house on sand? Let me look that up real quick and see what He shows me there..."

"OK, I can see that I am building my life on this foundation, and that I will be judged by how my life has lined up with *the will of God*. What else can I learn here about my own life? Let's see...What is the difference between gold, silver, precious stones and wood, hay and straw? Well, the first group are lasting. They are valuable. They don't burn. They are beautiful to look upon. Maybe the Lord is showing me that when I am obeying His will my life looks beautiful! Maybe when it is really built on the foundation of Christ, my life will truly touch others and the effects will last an eternity.

"What else? Each man's work...My work...What is my work? What has God called me to do in life? Well, I know that my work is to love others and to live a life of mercy to others. I know that I can look spiritual to others, but one day I will stand before the Lord and all my self-serving motives will be revealed. Okay, let me put down my answer:"

This passage of Scripture shows me that if I build my house upon the foundation of Christ, if I live my life in accordance with His will—as shown in the story of Matthew 7—then my life will appear as beautiful as gold, silver, & precious stones when the Lord looks upon it. I will be rewarded with eternal treasures. But when I do things *my* way, then my efforts will be burned up! I know that I will be judged—not on how spiritual I may appear to others—but on how much love I have really shown to

others. The truth about my life and motives will be revealed when I stand before the Lord.

Can you now see the difference between someone who prayerfully put his heart into the question, and someone who just scribbled out the first thing that came to his mind? The answer given here isn't that much longer, it's just more personal, more relevant and effective. The more prayer and effort you put into these studies, the more you will find your heart changing!

Christian Stories

At the end of each week you will find the story of the Church woven in character studies of different Christians down through the centuries. The purpose for this is simple. It is my hope that, as you read these stories, you will be deeply affected by the level of devotion of others who have served God. Their relationship with the Lord was all they had, and it showed by their lives. As you go through these stories, please ask God to show you what Christianity is really all about.

Well, you're all set! Get started this coming Monday and stay faithful everyday. God will use it to help *you* find the deep, heart-felt walk of repentance I know you desire.

MEMORY VERSE: HEBREWS 13:17

Unfortunately, however, because of our mobile society and the make-up of our large churches, believers find it very easy to attend church without any true accountability. This is one of the great tragedies of the American Church today: millions of Christians “doing their own thing,” without being answerable to the leadership God has placed over them and even to each other. This is one of the main reasons sin is so rampant today in our churches.

1. Write out Ephesians 5:21 and explain what you think it means.
2. Read Acts 4:32-5:16. Explain how the selfless acts of generosity of the early Christians contributed to an atmosphere of mutual support in the Church. Please take your time, think this question through, and make your answer thorough.

WEEK 1: BIBLICAL SUBMISSION



Day Two: Submission and Subjection

1. Look up the following verses on submission and subjection. Write out what you have learned about these principles in the space provided.
 - a. Luke 2:51
 - b. Romans 13:5
 - c. I Corinthians 16:15-16
 - d. Ephesians 5:24
 - e. I Peter 5:5
2. Now look up the word “submit” in the back of your *Strong’s Concordance*. The same Greek word (#5293) is used in each of the above instances. Write out the Greek word and its English definition.

WEEK 1: BIBLICAL SUBMISSION



Day Three: Rebellion

The opposite of submission is rebellion. Rebellion comes from a stubborn independence and a prideful attitude that a person should not have to accept authority. When Christ was asked to submit to the authority of God's will, He said "...not My will but Thine." When Satan was asked to submit, he refused.

1. Read the passage about Satan's downfall in Isaiah 14:12-15. Write out Satan's five "I wills" and the final outcome of his actions.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Outcome:

2. Now read the passage about Christ's exaltation in Philippians 2:5-11. Write out five of the steps Jesus took in submission to the Father. Write out His final outcome.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Outcome:

3. Can you see the opposite paths taken and the outcome of each? Write out Matthew 23:12.



Day Four: Spiritual Authority

1. Write out Hebrews 13:17 and what this verse means to your life, especially in your present situation.

2. Richard Wurmbrand, a Romanian pastor who spent fourteen years being tortured in communist prisons (see Week 23) said the following about spiritual authority:

I can admit of no independent free-lances in Christianity. Christians are soldiers who belong to an army. They have commanders, and must obey them. Christ himself 'gave some apostles... some pastors and teachers.' Nobody can be a Christian and declare Jesus as his only pastor, just as nobody can obey a general while refusing obedience to the captain, or even the sergeant, though these may be less competent than the commander-in-chief.

We used to live under a free enterprise system, and we have applied to our churches principles and ideas taken from this system. But Christianity is not of this world. There is no such thing as free enterprise in Christianity. There is organization, hierarchy and, I repeat, obedience.¹

Can you see any "free enterprise" attitudes in your heart in regard to Christianity? Do you tend to see yourself as being independent of the leadership of others? Explain your answers.

3. At this present stage of your Christian life, what position in God's army would you consider yourself to be in (general, sergeant, private, etc.)? Explain why you see yourself in that position.

WEEK 1: BIBLICAL SUBMISSION



Day Five: Submission to Authority

The thing we must understand about biblical submission is that we are not called to be in submission to the man, but to the *position of authority* God has placed him in. It is this same case with police officers. We obey that man because he has a badge on his chest which is the emblem of the authority that has been vested in him by our government. Although we are a free nation with individual rights, we don't have the right to disobey a police officer when he is acting on behalf of the government.

In I Peter 2:18-23, we find the apostle talking to slaves about being submitted to their masters. But even though we aren't slaves, some valuable insights are given in this section of Scripture regarding submission to leadership. Read these verses and answer the following questions:

1. What kind of leaders (masters) should we submit to? (verse 18)
2. What finds favor with God? (verses 19-20)
3. What example did Christ leave us to follow? (verses 21-24)
4. By responding to evil men the way He did, who did He entrust His situation to? (verse 23)

WEEK 1: BIBLICAL SUBMISSION



Day Six: The Man of Sorrows

Read the following verses about Jesus Christ, and describe what He went through for our sake.

1. Philippians 2:5-7
2. Isaiah 53:3
3. John 6:66
4. Psalm 22:6-8
5. John 7:5
6. Matthew 26:67-68
7. Mark 15:16-20
8. John 19:17-18
9. Psalm 22:14-18