A Biblical Call to True Repentance and Intimacy with Christ

Shalom, and welcome as we learn the Word of God together! Today, we will reflect on an important aspect of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ a lesson that speaks deeply to our spiritual condition and what God truly desires from us.

The Bible tells us clearly that we must grow in our knowledge of Christ so that we are no longer spiritually immature and unstable:

> “...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine...” *(Ephesians 4:14, ESV)*

Jesus Ministered to All Without Partiality

In His earthly ministry, Jesus went from place to place, preaching the gospel to everyone regardless of age, status, or background. He reached out to the rich and the poor, the religious and the sinners, the clean and the unclean, children and elders. He did not choose one class of people to focus on; instead, He made

Himself available to all.

This teaches us that when we take the gospel to others, we must not be selective or prejudiced. Sadly, some avoid preaching to the poor, assuming they have nothing to offer, while others avoid the rich, thinking they are unreachable or uninterested. But Jesus did not discriminate, His goal was not to gain material benefit but to win souls for the Kingdom.

Jesus Was Misunderstood But His Goal Was Redemption

Everywhere He went, people misinterpreted His intentions.

- When He associated with sinners and the poor, people accused Him of being a drunkard or immoral.

- When He was seen among the rich, some thought He was after their money.

But the Lord made His purpose clear: He did not come to gain

wealth, but to call sinners to repentance.

> *Matthew 9:10–13 (ESV):*
> “And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.
> And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’
> But when he heard it, he said, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.
> Go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.” For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.’”

“I desire mercy, not sacrifice” What does this mean?

Jesus was quoting Hosea 6:6, emphasizing that God values a repentant, merciful heart more than external religious rituals. Jesus did not dine with tax collectors because He needed their riches He came to offer them mercy, that they might recognize their sin and repent.

God Desires Your Heart, Not Your Wealth

Many of us think God is primarily concerned with our material wealth or our lack of it. But in truth, God is not distressed by your financial poverty, but by your spiritual poverty. He rejoices not in your material riches, but in the richness of your soul.

If Jesus is visiting your life today, He is not asking for your possessions. He is saying again:

> *"I desire mercy, not sacrifice."*Matthew 9:13

That is why He said, *"Go and learn what this means..."*because the people around Him misunderstood His mission. They thought His focus was external when in truth, His mission was internal and eternal.

The Example of Mary and Martha

Another story that drives this point home is the account of Mary

and Martha in Luke 10:38–42.

> “Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.
> And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching.
> But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.’
> But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things,
> but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.’” *(Luke 10:38–42, ESV)*

What did Jesus mean?

Mary chose to sit and listen to Jesus the “one necessary thing.” Martha was busy preparing things for Him, but in doing so, she missed what Jesus truly came to give: life through His words.

Many of us are like Martha we rush to serve God before we allow Him to serve us with His Word and presence. Jesus was not

rebuking Martha for hospitality, but for putting service before relationship.

Again, Jesus could have said: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”

Do Not Offer Sacrifices Without a Clean Heart

Too often, people focus on giving tithes, fasting, or serving in church while ignoring the corruption, sin, and spiritual decay in their hearts. That is not what God desires first.

> *Matthew 23:23–26 (ESV):*
> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness...
> You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.”

God is saying: Clean your heart first. Then your offerings will be acceptable.

The Fast That God Desires

You may fast often, pray loudly, or give generously, but if you have not truly repented, you are missing what God wants. True fasting is more than skipping meals.

> *Isaiah 58:6–7 (ESV):*
> “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free...
> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house...?”

True fasting begins with obedience, repentance, and mercy.

Today Is the Day to Return to God

If you have not yet truly given your life to Jesus, the door is still open but not forever. The path of salvation is becoming narrower each day.

> “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction… For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” *Matthew 7:13–14 (ESV)*

Make the choice now to turn away from sin and surrender fully to Christ. Repent and be baptized.

> *Acts 2:38 (ESV):*
> “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

What God Truly Wants from You

God is not asking first for your money, your fasting, or your church work. He is asking for your heart.

> *Psalm 51:17 (ESV):*
> “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

Let your first offering be a repentant heart. Only then will your other offerings be pleasing to God.

It is my prayer that God grants you understanding and conviction through this message. If you are ready, take these steps:

1. Repent sincerely Turn from your sins with intention and humility.

2. Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

3. Receive the Holy Spirit, who will guide you into all truth and empower you to live a holy life.

> “For God does not desire that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” *2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)*

The Lord is calling you now not for your sacrifice, but for your soul.

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