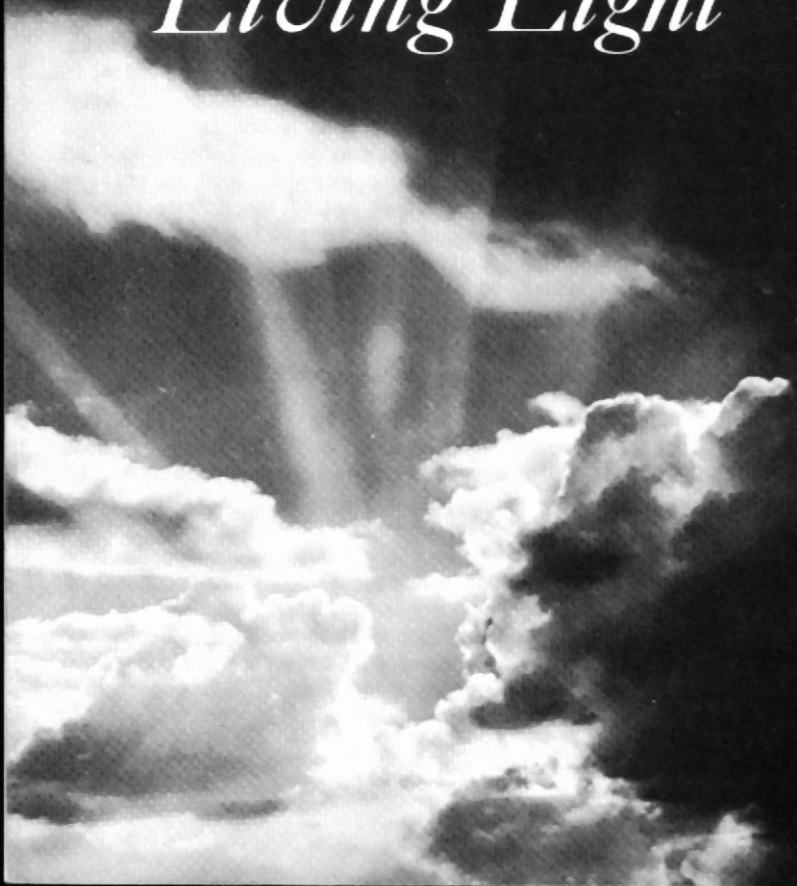


REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM

*Rays of  
Living Light*



# REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM

BY PRESIDENT CHARLES W. PENROSE

## FRUITS OF FAITH

In previous tracts of this series it has been shown that there can be but one true religion, because there is but one Supreme God; that it must be revealed from him instead of being made by man; and that the first principle of that religion is faith, which can be made manifest only by works. Let us now see what those works are which are essential to salvation. The first fruit of faith in God and in Jesus Christ is repentance of sin. Sin against God is the transgression of his law. Conviction of sin comes through faith in God and his law. Conviction leads to humility and repentance and obedience. Sorrow for sin is not of itself true repentance, which comprehends not only regret for the past, but reformation for the future. It includes determination to forsake and refrain from sin. As the Apostle Paul expressed it, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of."<sup>1</sup> When the sinner is sorry because he has been found out, that is not true repentance. Grief is an element of repentance, because when a believer perceives that he has broken a law of God, he feels remorse. But unless he resolves to turn away from that transgression, and not repeat it, he does not reach full repentance.

## NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE

"Cease to do evil, learn to do well,"<sup>2</sup> has been the word of God and his inspired servants through all the ages. It is a step forward in practical religion. It is absolutely necessary to salvation. Without it belief in Christ is vain. He said himself, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2 Corinthians 7:10.

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 1:16-17.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 13:3.

God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent."<sup>4</sup> Jesus instructed that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."<sup>5</sup> The idea that people may sin against God and against humanity, and by mere belief in the merits of the Savior, be absolved from all the consequences of their guilt, is one of the greatest of the many absurdities which have been grafted by the hand of man upon the tree of religion.

### OBJECT OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

Christ gave himself a sacrifice to save mankind from their sins, not in their sins. His work is to redeem humanity by lifting it up to Deity. His Gospel teaches purification from sin and exaltation into the righteousness of God. The atonement wrought out on Calvary is as much misunderstood by modern divines who preach it as were the teachings of Moses and the prophets by the sectaries who rejected the Nazarene. That atonement was for a dual purpose. First, to redeem mankind from the consequences of the original sin committed in the Garden of Eden, and second, to open the way to salvation from the actual sins committed by the posterity of Adam.

### REDEMPTION FROM ORIGINAL SIN

As to the first, redemption will come to all the race without effort on their part. Death came into the world in the beginning because the divine law was broken. It passed upon all the descendants of the transgressor. Christ gave himself a sacrifice for that sin. As by one came death, so by one will come life. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."<sup>6</sup> As the sons and daughters of Adam were not personally engaged in or responsible for the transgression which brought death, so they are not

<sup>4</sup>Acts 17:30.

<sup>5</sup>Luke 24:47.

<sup>6</sup>1 Corinthians 15:22.

required to do anything in the work which shall restore them to life. The resurrection will be as broad as the death. The raising up will be coextensive with the effects of the fall. But when through Christ the resurrection is accomplished, the dead, small and great, who are thus brought up and redeemed from the grave, will be judged according to their works.<sup>7</sup>

### REDEMPTION FROM INDIVIDUAL SIN

As to the second—the actual sins of each individual, salvation will come through faith in Christ and obedience to his Gospel. Each intelligent person is accountable for his own acts. He must do what is required in order that he may be saved from his sins. The power is inherent in man to do right or do wrong. In this he is a free agent. He can resist evil and do good, or resist good and do evil, as he elects. No matter how great may be the force of circumstances and environments, and the pressure of hereditary influences, the volition of the creature remains. The doctrine of rewards and punishments is predicated upon individual freedom of the will and personal responsibility for its exercise. Christ has done for mankind that and that alone which they were not able to do for themselves. That which they can perform is required of everyone. They can believe, they can repent, and they can receive and obey the commandments of Christ given as conditions to salvation. Unless they do this, although they will be raised from the dead and appear before the Eternal Judge, they cannot be exalted to dwell in his presence.

### SALVATION ON CONDITION OF OBEDIENCE

Thus it will be seen that while Christ died, unconditionally, for the original sin by which death came into the world, he died as a propitiation for the actual sins of the world, conditionally. And it was to proclaim these conditions and

<sup>7</sup>Revelations 20:12.

offer them to every creature that he sent his Apostles forth as ministers of salvation. There is no other way to eternal life. The plan of salvation is not changed to suit the notions and opinions of man. It does not vary in different ages, nor among different nations. It is the "everlasting Gospel." The law of Moses was a temporary and imperfect law of carnal commandments given because the Gospel had been rejected by the Israelites. It answered its purpose and passed away when the one eternal Gospel plan was restored by Jesus Christ, through whom alone mankind can be saved, and that salvation cannot be obtained except by faith in him, which comprehends obedience to his requirements.

### REMISSION OF SINS

It has been shown that faith is the first principle of the Gospel, and repentance—the forsaking of sin, is the second, and it is now necessary to present the third principle, which is the remission of sins. The popular idea of modern Christendom is that repentance of itself brings remission of sins. That is another serious mistake. Payment of debts is not brought about by simply ceasing to get credit; determination to sin no more does not wipe out sins already committed. God is a being of order and law. He has instituted the means whereby each sinner may receive a cleansing from the past. His laws are as uniform in the spiritual world as in the natural world; obedience to those laws is as necessary in one sphere as in the other. Remission of sins comes to the repentant believer through baptism, when it is performed by divine direction and under divine authority.

### BAPTISM FOR REMISSION OF SINS

Baptism for the remission of sins was preached and practiced by John, the forerunner of Jesus. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."<sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ honored that baptism

<sup>8</sup>Mark 1:4.

in person and by his teachings. He also sent his Apostles to preach it to every creature.<sup>9</sup> Previous to preaching that baptism, he instructed his Apostles to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high.<sup>10</sup> That power was bestowed upon them on the Day of Pentecost, when they were assembled in one place with one accord, and the Holy Ghost was manifested to them in visible form. To the people who gathered to hear the Apostles, forming a great multitude, Peter preached the first Gospel sermon after the resurrection of Christ, as is recorded in the 2nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. After testifying of the mission and resurrection of Jesus the Christ, in response to their inquiry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."<sup>11</sup> Three thousand people on that day received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and were baptized for the remission of their sins.

### BLOOD OF CHRIST CLEANSSES FROM ALL SIN

The remission of sins is given in baptism to those who believe and repent, but comes through the atonement wrought out by Jesus Christ. "Without shedding of blood is no remission."<sup>12</sup> The blood of Christ answers for the blood of the sinner who complies with the conditions required in Christ's Gospel. The benefits of that atonement are offered to all to whom the Gospel is preached, but are obtained only by those who render obedience to it. The scripture is often quoted which says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." But this is only part of the text, and is there-

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<sup>9</sup>Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16.

<sup>10</sup>Luke 24:47-49.

<sup>11</sup>Acts 2:37-39.

<sup>12</sup>Hebrews 9:22.

fore misleading. Here is the scripture as it stands: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."<sup>13</sup>

### BAPTISM BY IMMERSION

Baptism was instituted for the remission of sins by divine command. It is therefore essential. It is a sign of cleansing, purification, death to sin, burial from the world and resurrection to a new life in Christ Jesus. For, baptism means immersion. The sprinkling or pouring of water on the body is not baptism. The ordinance of baptism preached by John, the forerunner; by Christ himself; and by the Apostles whom he sent as his messengers, was both a burial and a birth. When Jesus was baptized by John it was in the river Jordan: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."<sup>14</sup> Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>15</sup> Jesus himself set the example, and was born of water and of the Spirit, and though he knew no sin, had to be baptized in order to

<sup>13</sup> John 1:5-7.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 3:13-17.

<sup>15</sup> John 3:5.

“fulfill all righteousness.” When Philip baptized the great man of Ethiopia, “they went down both into the water . . . and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.”<sup>16</sup> John baptized “in Aenon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.”<sup>17</sup> Paul likened baptism to a burial and a resurrection.<sup>18</sup> Peter cited the flood as a figure of baptism<sup>19</sup>

### INFANT BAPTISM—AUTHORITY

The order of the Gospel as taught by Christ and his Apostles is first, faith; second, repentance; and third, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, with the promise of the Holy Ghost to all who complied therewith. Infant baptism is a palpable heresy. Sin is the transgression of the law. Infants cannot commit sin. Baptism must follow faith and repentance. Infants cannot exercise faith, and they have nothing to repent of even if they were capable of repentance. God never authorized anyone to baptize an infant. Jesus blessed little children and said, “of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Baptism to be acceptable to God must be performed by one having actual divine authority. It must be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. No man has the right to assume that authority. It must come from God or the baptism will be void and of no effect. When properly administered it brings remission of sins, and the baptized believer becomes a new creature, stands clean before God, and is prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Further explanations on this all-important subject will be given in succeeding tracts. Let the reader ponder, investigate, and enter upon the path of eternal life and salvation!

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<sup>16</sup>Acts 8:35-39.

<sup>17</sup>John 3:23.

<sup>18</sup>Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12.

<sup>19</sup>1 Peter 3:20-21.

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