

Growth In God: Coming to Grips with Oneself & Repentance

Coming to Grips with Oneself

What does it mean to come to grips with yourself?

Coming to grips: To begin to understand or deal with (something, such as a problem) in a direct or effective way; To begin to or make an effort to understand, accept, and deal with a difficult or problematic person, thing, or situation.

Realization: *An act of becoming fully aware of something as a fact; to understand clearly.*

Who are you?

- Where are you right now at this point in your life?
- What choices have you made to lead you where you are now?
- If you continue down the path you're on, where is your life headed?

The choices we make now and the life we choose to live determines our fate later. But truth is, sometimes we think we know what's best when we really don't. The Bible says in Prov 14:12 - "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death." So, when we decide what's best for our own lives, we find ourselves caught in situations and troubles that could've easily been avoided.

Repentance

Personal Story: When I was (7 years old) in elementary school I would get picked up from school, but there were times when my parents let me walk home. because we lived a few minutes from the school. Every time I was going to walk home after school my parents would tell me to come straight home and nowhere else. Even if I wanted to go to a friend's house, still come straight home and they'll take me to my friend's house. Well, one day I decided to walk with my friend and go over to her house instead of going straight home as my parents told me to. When I got to my friend's house, I called my mom and told her where I was, and she came to pick me up. When I got home, she questioned why I didn't come straight like instructed and she disciplined me. I remember at that moment I felt so bad because I not only disobeyed my parents, but I displeased them. When I walked to my friend's house that day, I decided to step outside the guidance of my parents, and I automatically put myself in danger. I learned my lesson and from then on, and I walked straight home.

It's the same way with God. He gives us instructions and guidelines to not be involved with certain things or people, not to restrict us from living, but to protect us. The Lord wants to keep us from going down the wrong path and He knows what stumbling blocks will prevent us from growing in Him or even getting to know who He is. But we don't always see it that way, and we decide that we know what's best for our own lives and follow our own ways. It's when we live by our own way of thinking when we get caught in situations and trouble that could've been easily avoided if we only listened and walked in obedience.

Realization: *An act of becoming fully aware of something as a fact; to understand clearly.*

- Where are you at this point, mentally, physically, and spiritually?
- Where are you standing with the Lord?
- Are you in the faith?

2 Cor. 13:5 says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ be in you, except ye be reprobates." If you realize that how you've been living has led you to this point and the path you're headed on if a change isn't made and want to be saved, you might ask yourself what must I do?

What Must I Do?

Those not in the faith: you have to learn who he is

Coming to grips with that I want and need Christ in my life. Repentance and baptism

For those who aren't in faith, but want to be saved. In Acts 2:14-47 the disciple Peter is speaking to the crowd at Pentecost regarding what they were witnessing and the life of Jesus. When Peter spoke to the crowd scripture says that the people were pricked in their hearts, insomuch, that they asked what shall we do to be saved? In other words, the people came to a realization about their life, and how they've been living and they didn't want to live that way anymore.

Acts 2:38 says, "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."

So, for those who aren't in the faith, but want to be the Bible tells us that we are to repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins.

So, it's in those moments when we need to repent for walking our own way and getting ourselves into trouble. Some of you may be asking what does it mean to repent?

Repentance: *Feeling sorry for something one has done or failed to do, and then turning from one's wrongdoing toward God. The action of repenting: the feeling of remorse or regret.*

So, to repent means to confess or tell our sins (wrongdoings) to Christ and ask forgiveness for going against His Word and choosing not to repeat the same deed again. We do this not only because we did what we were told not to, but because it's also displeasing to Him.

As I mentioned before repentance is feeling sorry for something one has done or failed to do and then turning from one's wrongdoing toward God. The action of repenting: the feeling of remorse or regret.

How does one repent? You ask Jesus to forgive you of all the sins that you have committed and that you don't want to continue committing these sins. And you no longer want to live according to yourselves, but according to Him and His Word (the Bible). That you want to be free from the bondage of sin, and that you walk free in Him.

Those in the faith: For those who've remained in the faith.

1 John 9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When the followers of Christ sin, we are to acknowledge our sins and confess them to Him. To bring it to Christ and chose not to repeat the same mistakes. And to continue moving forward in

our walk with Jesus, not looking back on our past mistakes. But walking in the grace and mercy of the Lord because he has cleaned our slate of sins.

Those who've backslid: For those who've fallen from the faith.

Backslide: To *relapse or return to bad ways or errors.*

For example, someone who struggled with addiction. It could be anything: drugs, alcohol, pornography, gambling. This person has been clean (been involved with sed addiction) for years. Then one day they relapse. They revert or turn back into those previous habits and ways. That's what it means to backslide. To return or turn back into bad ways, habits, lifestyles, and mindsets. The same goes for those who've backslid in the faith.

What does it mean?

When someone backslides in the faith, just like someone who has relapsed into an addiction, they return to their old habits, mindsets, and way of life. You turn from the life in Christ and turn back into your old sinful habits. Ultimately, living the same way you were before you were saved.

How does one backslide?

You stop your walk with the Lord and decide to turn back to the way it was before you knew Him. You no longer follow after the things of God like reading your Bible, praying, going to the house of God, and leaning on Him for guidance and direction on how to navigate through life. But you depend on yourself and what you think is best and you follow the standards and principles of the world.

For those who have turned away from their relationship with Lord and want to return Verse: Romans 10:8-9 says, "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of the faith, which we preach:9 That if thou confess with thy mouth, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For you who have backslid in the faith scripture is telling us that we are to repent and bring those sins, habits, and lifestyles that aren't pleasing to the Lord and believe in your heart that He will forgive you and he will give you the newness of life. Rather than continuing to walk in the same habits and lifestyle of when you were in sin, you walk in forgiveness. Just like when I was a child after I got in trouble, I made up my mind not to do it again. I understood that I disobeyed my parents and the consequence of that. I also understood that I was forgiven. From that moment on I learned from my mistake and chose to walk in the forgiveness that was given to me. As the children of God, we are the same. Once we have acknowledged our sin and repented, we are to choose to not continue doing the same things or even having the same mindset as before, but rather, continue where we have left off in Christ. We are to understand the Lord has forgiven us of our wrongdoing and walk in that forgiveness rather than letting those past decisions and mindsets keep us from returning back to Him. Letting go of the old lifestyle go sin and returning back to Christ. When repent and acknowledge Him, He will receive you as if you never left. Also, it is important to know that when we repent, our habits, lifestyle, choices even our mindset should follow that decision.

Wherever you find yourself, whichever categories you find yourself fitting into know that a relationship with God and growth in Him first starts with coming to grips with yourself.

