

WALKING
WITH
Jesus
Repentance



Repentance in the White House





In 2001, Tim Goeglein started running the White House Office of Public Liaison, providing him almost daily access to then President George Bush for seven years. Then it all ended abruptly on February 29, 2008. A well-known blogger revealed the startling fact that 27 out of 39 of Goeglein's published articles had been plagiarised. By mid-afternoon the next day, Goeglein's career in the White House was over.

Goeglein, who admitted his guilt, said that this began “a personal crisis unequalled in my life, bringing great humiliation on my wife and children, my family, and my closest friends, including the President of the United States.”

Goeglein was summoned to the White House to face the President. Once inside the Oval Office, Goeglein shut the door, turned to the President and began, “I owe you an . . . ”

President Bush simply said: “Tim, you are forgiven.”

Tim was speechless. He tried again: “But, Sir . . . ”

The President interrupted him again, with a firm “Stop!” Then President Bush added, “I’ve known grace and mercy in my life, and you are forgiven.” After a long talk, a healing process was launched for Goeglein, which included repentance and reflection, then spiritual growth.

“Political power can lead to pride,” Goeglein later reflected. “That was my sin—one hundred percent pride. But offering and receiving forgiveness is a different kind of strength. That’s the kind of strength I want to develop now.” (*Warren Cole Smith, “Wins & Losses,” World magazine, 10-23-10, p. 11*).



HOW DO WE COME TO JESUS?

How is a sinner made right with God? It is only through Jesus that we can come close to God and are made holy. But how does one come to Jesus?

“When the crowd following the disciples became convicted of their sin, they cried out: ‘What shall we do?’ The disciple Peter answered: ‘Repent.’ Not long after that, he said, “Repent . . . and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” (Acts 3:19)

Q1

How can we be cleansed of our sins?



□ Acts 2:38



Further study: □ Acts 3:19

□ Proverbs 28:13 □ Ezekiel 36:31; 20:43

□ 2 Corinthians 7:9-11 □ Psalm 38:18

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REPENT?

Repentance includes sorrow for sin and turning away from it.

Until we are convicted of the damage and hurt that our sin causes and are wholeheartedly resolved to turn away from it, there won't be any real change or repentance in our lives.

 "Genuine repentance must bear the seal of a corrected life."
Lewis Korn

Sometimes we may feel badly because we have sinned, and perhaps even resolve to do better in the future because we are afraid of the consequences or possible punishment. This isn't the kind of repentance that the Bible teaches, as it doesn't involve a complete change of heart. Instead, this type of repentance is motivated by fear.

 Today, we are inclined to lament suffering rather than sin.

We see examples of this throughout the Bible. Esau, the son of Abraham, made a hasty decision that resulted in the loss of his inheritance. Esau felt regret but not true repentance. When Balaam saw an angel standing in his path holding a sword, he admitted he was wrong, but that was motivated from fear he would die, not because he truly repented of his actions.

Pharaoh was the ruler of Egypt when God's people the Israelites were enslaved around the year 1300BC (scholars vary in their dating the Exodus). God sent plagues on the land to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelites.

Pharaoh admitted his sin in order to escape further punishment, but as soon as the plagues stopped, his rebellious attitude returned.

Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus Christ, exclaimed: “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood” (Matthew 27:4). Although Judas was consumed by guilt and felt an awful sense of shame for his wrongdoing, his focus was on himself and he did not feel sorrow that he had indeed betrayed the Saviour.

All these people felt some degree of sorrow for the results of their sin, but they did not show sorrow or contrition for the sin itself.

BY THE LIGHT OF JESUS

Q2

The Bible describes Jesus as the “true light” that has come into the world. What does this mean?



□ John 1:5–9



□ John 12:46; 8:12 □ 2 Corinthians 4:6 □ 1 John 2:8
□ 1 Thessalonians 5:5 □ Matthew 6:23

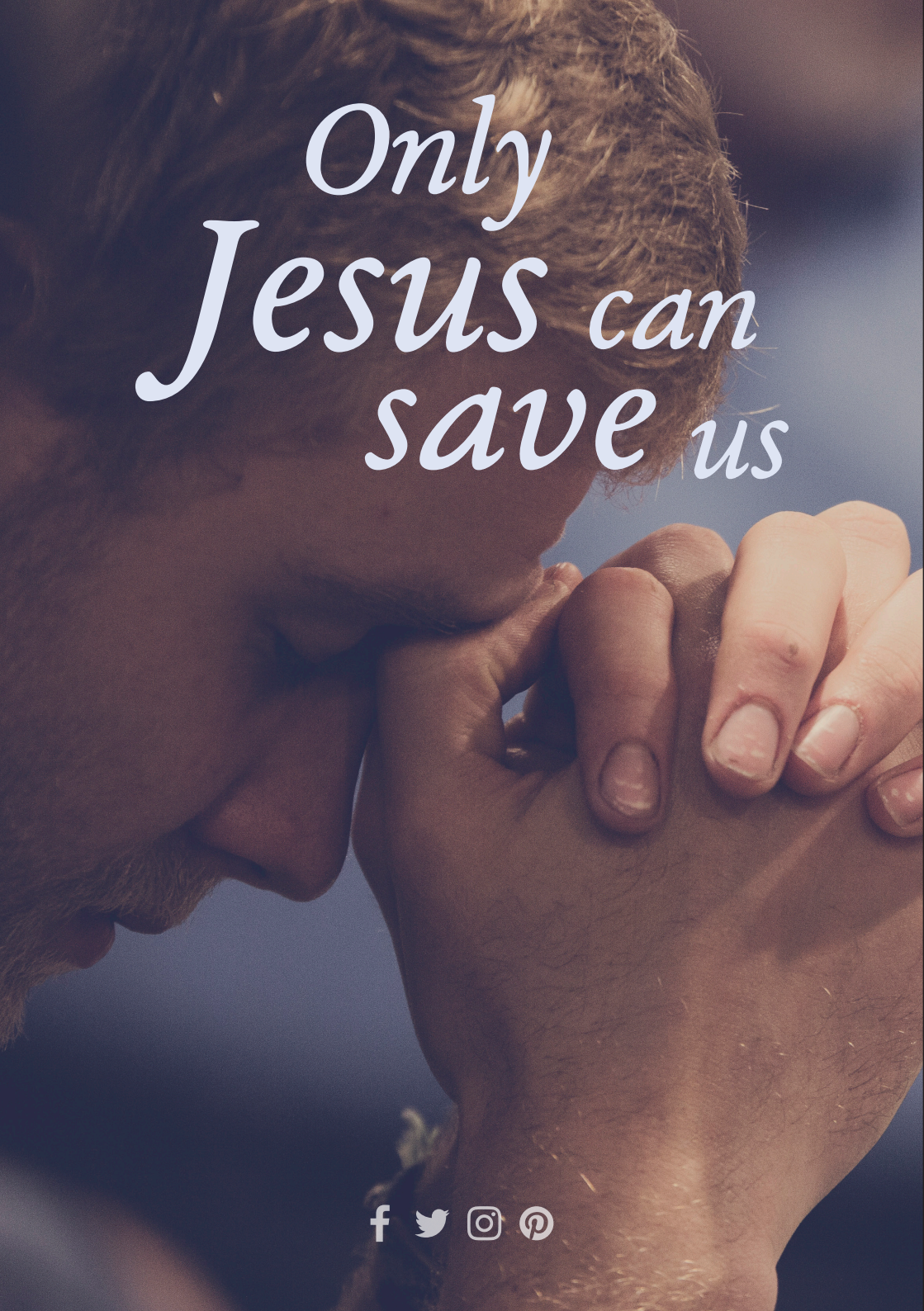
When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we begin to see the depth and holiness of God’s character as revealed in His law.

The “perfect light” of Jesus will reveals all the secret places of our soul. It will bring hidden things out into the light. Our true motivations and desires will be revealed. By the light of Jesus, we will see clearly and become aware of our need to be saved.



“But that we are so totally depraved,
is a truth which no one ever truly learned
by being only told it.”


— *John Newton (Select Letters of John Newton)*



*Only
Jesus can
save us*



By this light, we will know how far we fall short of God's desire for us, but we will also see God's love, holiness and perfect purity. We will see how much He longs for us to be cleansed of our sins, and be drawn to Him.

 "Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing before the searcher of hearts . . . and longs to be cleansed and restored to communion with Heaven." *Ellen G. White*

A PRAYER FOR A NEW HEART

Q3

What is the correct response when we learn of our sinfulness?




□ Psalm 51:1–4, 10



□ Psalm 32:5; 38:18 □ Ezekiel 36:31; 20:43 □ 1 John 1:7–9

A repentance like this is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Jesus, who ascended to heaven and has given gifts to us. This kind of prayer represents genuine repentance: it acknowledges the pain and sorrow caused by our sin. There is no effort to cover guilt or to escape punishment. It is a recognition of the enormity of sin and of seeing and hating the sin that exists in us.

In Psalm 51, King David is praying not only for forgiveness but for a new heart. He expresses his longing to be cleansed and to be made holy, so that he can be brought into a close relationship with God.

 “If you can't see the sun you will be impressed with a street light. If you've never felt thunder and lightning, you'll be impressed with fireworks. And if you turn your back on the greatness and majesty of God, you'll fall in love with a world of shadows and short-lived pleasures.” *John Piper*

Q4 *What happens when we truly repent?*



☐ *Psalm 32:1–11*



☐ *Isaiah 1:18* ☐ *Psalm 128:1* ☐ *Deuteronomy 5:33; 11:13–15*
☐ *Matthew 5:8* ☐ *Micah 7:18, 19*

Q5 *What needs to happen before we confess our sins?*



☐ *Matthew 11:28, 29*



☐ *Isaiah 55:1–3; 45:22–25* ☐ *John 6:37* ☐ *Revelation 22:17*
☐ *1 Peter 5:7*

Only Jesus can cleanse us of our sin and make us right with God. On this point, many people err. They think they cannot come to Jesus until they first repent. It is true that repentance does proceed forgiveness of sins for it is only the broken and contrite heart that will feel the need of Jesus. It is important to know that the Bible does not teach that the sinner must first repent before they can accept the invitation to walk with Jesus.

Jesus gives an open invitation for everyone to draw near to Him: “Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Just think about the depth of that invitation for a moment.

Confessing your sins shouldn't be a barrier that keeps you from Jesus. Jesus invites you to meet Him as you are, where you are, to begin your faith journey.

Q6 *Where does the sorrow for our sins come from?*



□ *Jeremiah 31:31–33, Acts 5:30, 31*




□ *Acts 3:26; 11:18* □ *Ezekiel 36:25–31* □ *Zechariah 12:10*
□ *Romans 11:26, 27* □ *2 Timothy 2:25, 26*

JESUS, A PERFECT FRIEND

As we become aware of the love of Jesus, He leads us to understand true sorrow for our sins. The disciple Peter states that God exalted Jesus “. . . to His right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31).

Without Jesus, there can be no repentance. Similarly, the Holy Spirit works on our hearts to lead us to repentance.

Jesus is the source of every good, perfect and noble desire. He is the only one who helps us see sin in all its ugliness and depravity.

 “Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our heart.”
Ellen G. White

Q7

Who did God lift up in order to make salvation possible?



☐ *John 12:32, 34*



☐ *Isaiah 49:6* ☐ *Romans 5:17–19*
☐ *1 Timothy 2:6* ☐ *Hebrews 2:9* ☐ *1 John 2:2*
☐ *Revelation 5:9* ☐ *Luke 15*

As we see Jesus dying on the cross at Calvary for the sins of the world, we will begin to understand the mystery of salvation. The gentle and kind Saviour gave His life for a broken world, so that through Him we might be saved.



"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am."

— *John Newton*

THE GREATEST LOVE

By dying for us, Jesus showed us the depth of His love, a love that we are unable to ever fully comprehend. As we see and experience His love for us, our hearts will be changed and we will know our need for a Saviour.

Jesus draws us to look at the Cross, to behold Him. Here we clearly see the pain and harm caused by our sin and begin to hate our sin while at the same time, desire to be made right with God. At this time, we experience the purity and holiness of Jesus and understand the incredible sacrifice He made by taking the burden of our sin upon His own shoulders. It was our sin resulted in Jesus sacrificing everything, but through Him, we are saved. Because of His sacrifice, we have a clear choice to accept Jesus or to resist the gift of eternal life.

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17)

When we desire to live the way God intended, this is evidence that the power of Jesus is working in us.



“The sinner may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Jesus, but if you do not resist, you will be drawn to Jesus.”

Ellen G. White

Q8

What invitation does God give to those who desire more?



□ *Revelation 22:17*



□ *John 7:37, 38; 4:10* □ *Isaiah 55:1–3; 12:3*

THE DESIRE FOR THE ETERNAL

Through the Holy Spirit, God speaks to our hearts and gives us a deep desire for more than the things of this world.

God is pleading with us to seek things that represent true peace and rest—which can only be found in the grace of Jesus and the joy that comes from experiencing His holiness, to which He is constantly seeking to draw us.

Jesus invites us to turn our minds and hearts away from the temporary pleasures and distractions of the world to focus on the infinite, eternal blessings that can be ours.

The waters of this world will not satisfy us, our thirst will always return. Only Jesus offers “living” water—the water of life—that will truly refresh us and give eternal satisfaction. This is what He promises to us in Revelation 22:17.

In your heart, you surely recognise a longing and a desire for something more, something better than the brokenness you see around you. You have a desire for purpose, you want peace in your heart. This is God calling to you. Only God can satisfy your deepest desires and restore your broken lives into something whole and new.

Ask Jesus to help you to truly repent for your sins, and to reveal His endless love and perfect purity to you.

Q9

When we see Jesus' true character, what does this make us realise?



□ Isaiah 64:6



□ Isaiah 53:6 □ Job 14:4; 15:14–16; 25:4 □ Psalm 51:5
□ Romans 7:18, 24 □ Ephesians 2:1, 2 □ Ezekiel 36:31

GOD'S LAW OF LOVE

Jesus' life on Earth was a perfect depiction of the principles of God's law of love. Jesus lived with kindness and unselfish love, showing compassion for everyone He met.

By reading about His life in the Bible, you begin to recognise your own sinfulness, and all the ways you fall short as a result of your failures.




"One ray of glory, one gleam of the purity of Christ penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct."

Ellen G. White



It might seem like you are doing okay. After all, you may think, you are better than plenty of other people and may not feel that you are like the sinners described in the Bible, but this is an incorrect measure. Hidden within your nature are defects that can be clearly seen by God who sees all things. Pride gives an inability to see your true condition and the consequence of sin.

When you spend time with Jesus and reflect on His life, you will see the impurity that exists within your own life and the selfishness that lurks behind every action and motivation. Even when you are outwardly doing the right thing, your flawed heart is still guiding every decision.

 "The exceeding sinfulness of man can only be estimated in the light of the cross. . . . As you see the enormity of sin, as you see yourself as you really are, do not give up in despair. It was sinners that Christ came to save." *Ellen G. White*

By the penetrating light of Jesus, you will see the darkness that exists in your own life and how desperately you need a Saviour. As you look upon the purity and holiness of Jesus, the ugliness of your own sin will become clear and you will recognise that you are a sinner need of saving.

Q10

What was Daniel's reaction when he recognised his own shortcomings?




☐ Daniel 10:7, 8



☐ Daniel 8:17, 18 ☐ Revelation 1:17 ☐ Mark 9:5, 6 ☐ Luke 1:12

When the prophet Daniel saw the glory of the angel before him, he became weak and lost his strength. Seeing your true condition will create a desire for a pure heart that is in harmony with God's law which is a reflection His character.

 "When Satan comes to tell you that you are a great sinner, look up to your Redeemer and talk of His merits. Acknowledge your sin, but tell the enemy that Jesus came into the world to save sinners."
Ellen G. White

Q11

What happens when we realise the true meaning of God's holy law?



☐ *Romans 7:9*



☐ *Romans 7:7; 3:20; 8:3–7* ☐ *1 John 3:4* ☐ *Luke 10:25-28*
☐ *Galatians 3:10; 2:19–21*

Paul explains that by the definition of the law, he was “blameless”, but the spiritual character of the law showed him as a sinner (Philippians 3:6). Although his actions may have outwardly been good, he recognised that within himself he still fell into the trap of selfishness and sin. His own nature had led him astray, even though his outward actions may have been within the law itself. As Paul became convicted of God's holiness as seen in His law, he was ashamed of his shortcomings and recognised that it was only through God that he could hope to experience freedom from his sins.

We have been great sinners, but Jesus died that we might be forgiven. Those to whom God has forgiven most, will love most (Luke 7:43). When you fully comprehend the love of God, you will fully comprehend the sinfulness of sin.

Study God's word prayerfully. The Bible presents in the law of God and the life of Christ, the great principles of holiness, without which "no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). It convinces of sin and plainly reveals the way of salvation. Read the Bible carefully and follow it as the voice of God speaking to your heart.



"If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

— *C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity)*

REFLECTIONS

Thank you, Jesus, for your invitation. I want to experience the perfect rest that you promise.

YES	UNDECIDED
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As I come to know Jesus more and read the Bible, I see Jesus and realise my own sins and my need of Him.

YES	UNDECIDED
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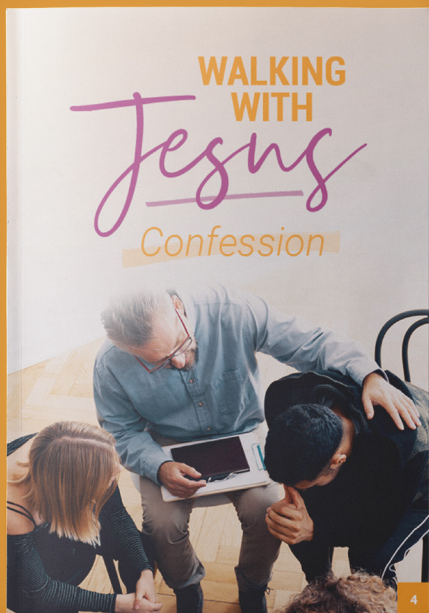
I want to be like Jesus, but realise I am powerless to change on my own.

YES	UNDECIDED
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I am thankful that I can come to Jesus as I am and claim His promise to transform my life into one that will bring honour to Him. I put my life into His hands.

YES	UNDECIDED
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CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 4: **CONFESSION**

God has promised that when we confess our sins and give our lives over to Him that our sins will be forgiven. Learn how Jesus' perfection can cover your past mistakes as you claim this amazing promise of forgiveness. Experience God's mercy for yourself when you come before Him with a humble heart.

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