

April 17, 2011 Solemn Assembly A Week Long Guide for Repentance

(Copied from Praying God's Heart by Gregory Frizzell)

In this urgent call to prayer for Southern Baptists, it is absolutely critical that serious repentance be a central part of the emphasis. Unfortunately, many modern calls to prayer are somewhat lacking in deep examination and repentance. For this reason, there is often lessened impact toward true revival. Biblically and historically, true revival prayer always involves deep, Bible-based repentance. I am greatly encouraged that the current call to prayer from Bryant Wright is indeed a call for both prayer and repentance.

To assist in this process, I am posting a cleansing journey specifically for the April emphasis. (For sake of space and user practicality for this brief emphasis, I have condensed the seven day material into five.) The five day journey is designed to produce specific steps of lasting repentance. Genuine biblical confession must involve specific, lasting change. (Proverbs 28:13) Though this particular cleansing pattern is laid out in a five day process, it could also be done on a Sunday afternoon. Whether we do it in five days or one, the important thing is that we take sufficient time and let God speak. Prayerfully read the following Scriptures and reflective questions. Ask God to cleanse and renew your heart.

Day One Pure Thoughts and Attitudes

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24) "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7a)

"Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" (Matthew 22:37)

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)

"But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28)

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

"Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5)

"God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5b)

Prayerfully work through the following reflective questions. Fully confess and forsake whatever God brings to mind. Trust God to fill and empower you with His Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection —

- (a) Do I tend to think more about worldly things than spiritual? ____
- (b) Does the focus of my thoughts often indicate a lack of first love passion for Jesus? ____
- (c) Do I spend more time on hobbies, sports or recreation than God's word and prayer? ____
- (d) Do I have any patterns of unclean or lustful thoughts? ____
- (e) Have I opened the door to impurity by anything I view on-line or in other media? ____
- (f) Do I frequently have thoughts that are envious or jealous? ____
- (g) Am I overly competitive and self-exalting? ____
- (h) Am I interested in serving God only if I can have a preeminent role? ____
- (i) Am I determined to get my way? ____
- (j) Am I overly interested in being noticed? ____
- (k) Do I often have thoughts that are angry or resentful? ____
- (l) Am I frequently dominated by thoughts of doubt instead of trust? ____
- (m) Do I consistently harbor thoughts of bitterness and unforgiveness? ____
- (n) Do I frequently brood about harsh things I would like to say to certain people or groups? ____

Please confess and forsake whatever God has revealed. Surrender your thoughts and yield them to Jesus. Remember, you are fully accepted and forgiven in Christ! Believe Christ to live through you by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:11)

For Prayer and Repentance — Go back and review the issues God revealed for repentance. Resolve now to put off all sinful thoughts and put on Christ by faith. Be very specific in what you confess and forsake. Place strong focus on identifying the specific righteous thoughts that will replace those that are wrong. List some of your key points for change.

Pause in prayer and trust Jesus to empower you with the Holy Spirit. Believe Him to fill you with His thoughts. Trust God for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Day Two
Holy Speech and Godly Communications

“A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart....A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back” (Proverbs 18:2, 29:11) “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, They will give account of it in the day of judgment.” (Matthew 12:36)
“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers...Neither filthiness nor foolish talking, nor jesting which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks.” (Ephesians 4:29; 5:4) “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.” (Colossians 3:9) “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” (James 1:19)

As seldom in history, sins of speech (and emails) are epidemic among believers. The current generation has witnessed a virtual explosion in everything from gossip and slander to angry outbursts and ungodly emailing. Little affects fellowship and spiritual power like unyielded tongues and reckless keypads. Fully confess and forsake all sins of speech or email. Trust God to fill and empower you by His Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and give God time to speak.

- Questions for Reflection — (a) Have I uttered any inappropriate or slang speech? ____
- (b) Do I have patterns of cursing or off-color words? ____
- (c) Am I prone to exaggeration or lying? ____
- (d) Do I have patterns of complaining and griping? ____
- (e) Am I guilty of any form of divisive speech? ____
- (f) Have I in any way spread criticism or lack of support for my spiritual leaders? ____
- (g) Do I have any patterns of critical, judgmental speech? ____
- (h) Have I blogged, emailed or forwarded anything that violated Scripture or grieved God’s Spirit? ____
- (i) Have I blogged or forwarded material when I was not entirely sure of its accuracy or appropriateness? ____
- (j) Do I have a tendency to hurt and offend others? ____
- (k) Have I said things when alone that would cause great shame if made public? ____

Remember, all will be revealed! (Romans 6:11) Claim God’s grace and trust Christ’s indwelling Spirit for your victory.

For Prayer and Repentance — Resolve now to put off all ungodly speech and wholly yield your tongue to Christ’s Lordship. Be very specific in your confession and repentance. List your key steps for obedience. . _____

Trust Jesus to fill your heart and empower your speech. Believe Him for the fullness and power of the

Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Day Three

Right Relationships and Biblical Reconciliation

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.....For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:14-15) *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”* (John 13:34-35) *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one”* (John 17:20-22)

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.....And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

(Ephesians 5:25-26, 6:4) “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.... Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise.” (Ephesians 5:22, 6:1-2) *“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

With God, everything is about relationship! At its heart, spirituality is about loving God and one another. (Matthew 22:37-39, 5:23-24, 6:14-15) Virtually nothing grieves God’s Spirit or blocks prayers like ignoring broken or damaged relationships. For this reason, it is vital that believers continually confess and forsake all relationship sins. Take your time and be very thorough! After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection —

- (a) Is there anyone (past or present) that I have offended but have not asked forgiveness? ____
- (b) Have I failed to seek full reconciliation and make restitution to anyone I have offended or in some way harmed? ____
- (c) Do I harbor the slightest unforgiveness and anger toward anyone? ____
- (d) Do I privately rehearse angry things I would like to say to certain people? ____
- (e) Have I in any way cooled off spiritually because of disappointments with God or people? ____
- (f) As a father, am I leading and training my family spiritually? ____
- (g) As a mother, am I sacrificially and joyfully serving my family and guiding them spiritually? ____
- (h) Have I in any way failed to honor, respect or give adequate attention and time to my parents? ____
- (i) Have I spoken or emailed negatively about anyone? ____
- (j) Have I publically criticized or maligned a fellow believer without first talking to them about the issue?

- (k) Have I forwarded items when I was not certain of their source? ____
- (l) Am I involved in any form of gossip or negative, critical speech? ____
- (m) Do I tend to hurt and offend people with my words or emails? ____
- (n) Is there any pattern of failing to respect and support my spiritual leaders? ____

All sins of relationships are very serious with God. Confession must be specific and repentance complete. Ask God for clear revelation of specific steps you may need to take. Resolve to be utterly honest with yourself and resist the human tendency to rationalize our sin.

For Prayer and Repentance — Determine now to put off sins of relationship and let Jesus be the Lord of all. Are there indeed certain people from whom I need to ask forgiveness? ____

Do I need to take specific steps of restitution? ____ (Restitution means repaying something I have taken or publically seeking to restore a reputation I have damaged.) Is there some offense or bitterness I need to finally release? ____ Be completely honest with God and yourself. (If people are coming to mind with whom you need to make a contact for reconciliation that is very likely God speaking to your heart.) Take time to write out specific steps for obeying God in relationships.

Pause for prayer and believe Christ to fill you with His love and power. Claim His full life and victory to operate in you. (Romans 6:6-14) Ask in faith for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Day Four

Victory Over Sins of Commission

“For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.” (Psalms 51:3) “Therefore having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Put simply, sins of commission are doing, saying or thinking anything God has forbidden. These can be anything from actions and words to thoughts or relationships. Fully confess and forsake all sins of commission. After each of the following questions, pause for God to speak.

Questions for Reflection —

- (a) Am I engaged in any form of physical, mental, on-line or phone immorality? ____
- (b) Have I compromised by viewing anything unclean via movies, TV or Internet? ____
- (c) Do I have habits that abuse or neglect my body? ____
- (d) Do I commit idolatry by placing anyone or anything over loving and serving God? ____
- (e) Have I dabbled in any form of gambling or new ageism? ____
- (f) Am I doing anything about which I do not have perfect peace? ____

- (g) Am I in any way harsh or unkind to others? ____
- (h) Do I often confess the same sins but fail to fully forsake them? ____
- (i) Have I abused God's grace by taking sin lightly? ____

For Prayer and Repentance — Resolve now to put off disobedience and put on full surrender to Christ. Be very specific in your confession and repentance. List your actual steps for making the changes.

Pray now and trust Jesus to fill you with His Spirit and power for full repentance. Claim the glorious victory described in Romans 6:6-14) Ask for the fire and passion of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13) Don't stop asking, believing and repenting until He powerfully touches your heart!

Day Five Overcoming Sins of Omission

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17) "He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." (Proverbs 28:13, emphasis added) "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke 12:47)

Sins of omission are those areas in which we consistently fail to do things God has commanded. In short, it is not doing or being God what tells us to do and be. Fully confess and forsake any patterns of omission. After each of the following questions, pause and listen for God's impressions.

Questions for Reflection —

- (a) Am I failing to abide in Jesus by neglecting regular time in His word and prayer? ____
- (b) Do I neglect consistent times of deep Scripture-based examination and confession? ____
- (c) Have I confessed certain sins but failed to fully repent and make restitution? ____
- (d) Do I neglect to be a daily witness and fail to generously support evangelism and missions? ____
- (e) Have I neglected to discern and use my spiritual gifts? ____
- (f) Am I allowing any point of spiritual bondage to remain in my life? ____
- (g) Have I failed to support and respect my spiritual leaders? ____
- (h) Am I failing to daily pursue holiness? ____
- (i) Am I robbing God by failing to tithe and give generous offerings beyond the tithe? ____
- (j) Have I neglected to work at improving my marriage and family life? ____
- (k) Do I fail to regularly pray with and disciple my family? ____

For Prayer and Repentance — Resolve now to put off your specific sins of neglect and put on full

obedience. Be very specific in identifying your areas for repentance. List the specific ways you will repent.

Plan your actual steps for making the changes. Pray now and believe Christ to fill you with a spirit of total obedience. (John 14:15) Ask in faith for the fullness of Christ in you by the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

For Further Information

To receive a more extensive seven-day tool for cleansing and repentance, you may contact Dr. Gregory Frizzell for information regarding two resources. One is Praying for Revival, Elections and Key Leaders and the second is Praying God's Heart in Times Like These. Both of these tools have extensive guides for strengthening personal prayer, family prayer, tearing down strongholds and praying for revival and spiritual awakening. They are designed for personal, small group or church-wide studies. The tools are also very effective for transforming corporate prayer meetings. They are designed to raise the effectiveness, depth and power of today's prayer movement.

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