

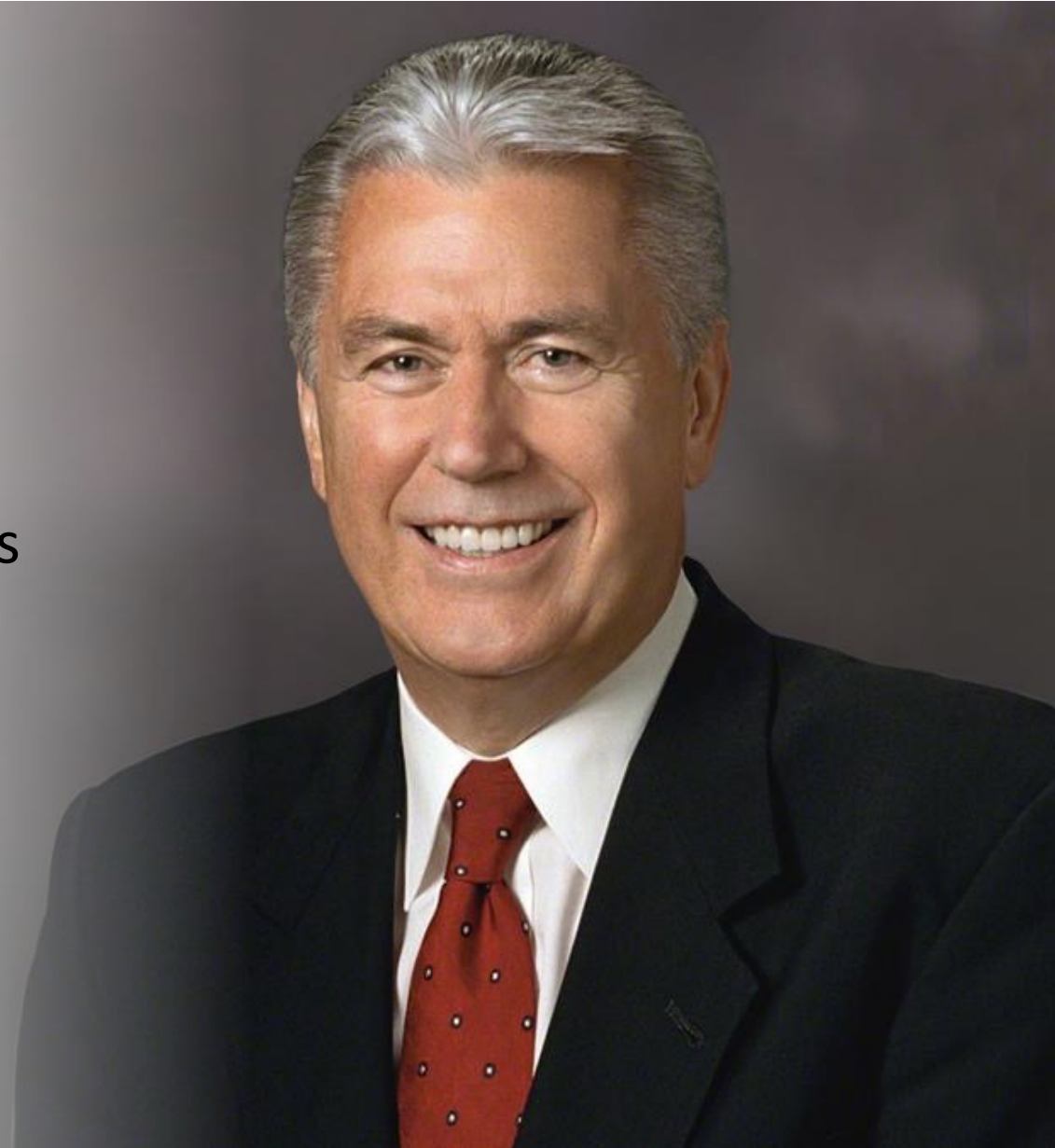
Turning Unto the Lord

Obuasi District Conference

Jesus Christ as our Mentor

“I believe that if the Lord is asked the question ‘What is of most worth unto me?’ He might keep it very simple and among other things might respond, ‘Let me be your mentor. Deepen your faith in me. Learn of me. Trust me. Fear not. I am with you always.’”

How do we let Jesus Christ be our mentor?



Our Source for Remission of Sins

“And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. “

- 2 Nephi 25:26

**What does it mean that
Christ is the source?**



Prophetic Priority

“And saying, *Repent* ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 3:2)

Please notice that the first word spoken by John as recorded in the New Testament is *repent*.

“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, *Repent*: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)

Again, notice that *repent* is the first recorded word of the Savior’s public ministry.



Elder David A. Bednar

Why?

Doctrine & Covenants

“Say nothing but repentance unto this generation; keep my commandments, and assist to bring forth my work.”

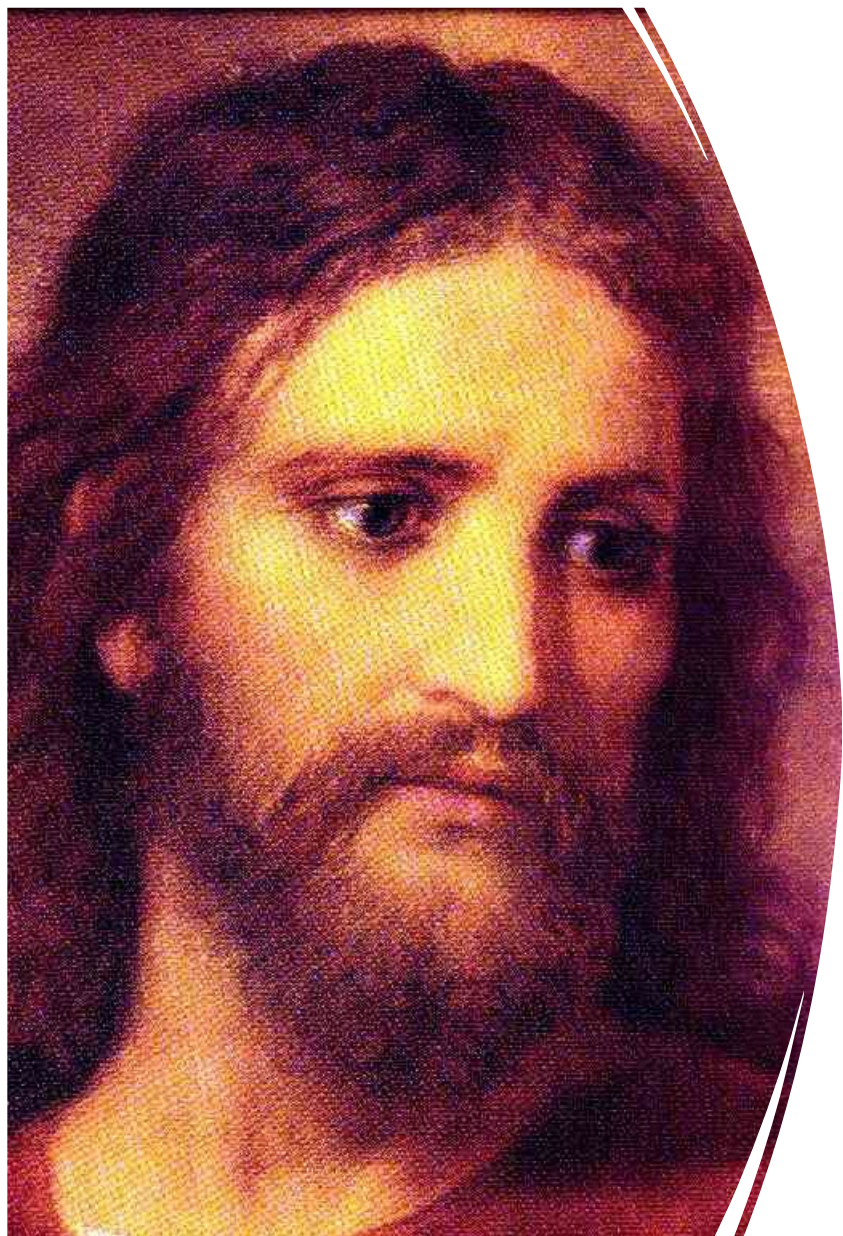
Doctrine & Covenants 6:9; 11:9

*“I say unto you, that the thing which will be of the most worth unto you will be to **declare repentance unto this people**, that you may bring souls unto me.”*

Doctrine & Covenants 15:6; 16:6

Why?





“Come Unto Me”

Yea, he saith: Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely... Alma 5:34

What does it mean to you to come unto Christ?

Alma 5:49

“And now I say unto you that this is the order after which I am called, yea, to preach unto my beloved brethren, yea, and every one that dwelleth in the land; yea, to preach unto all, both old and young, both bond and free; yea, I say unto you the aged, and also the middle aged, and the rising generation; yea, to cry unto them that they must repent and be born again.”

Why must we repent?



What is Repentance?



“Repenting is the first and natural consequence of placing our trust and confidence in the Savior. Described most simply, repentance is turning away from evil and turning to God. As we exercise faith in and on the Lord, we turn toward, come unto, and depend upon Him. Thus, repentance is trusting in and relying upon the Redeemer to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.”

“... repentance as the process of turning to God is an encouraging, hopeful, and recurring theme. As we study the scriptures, our understanding of this principle can be increased by mentally inserting the phrase “turn unto the Lord” each time we encounter the word *repentance*.”

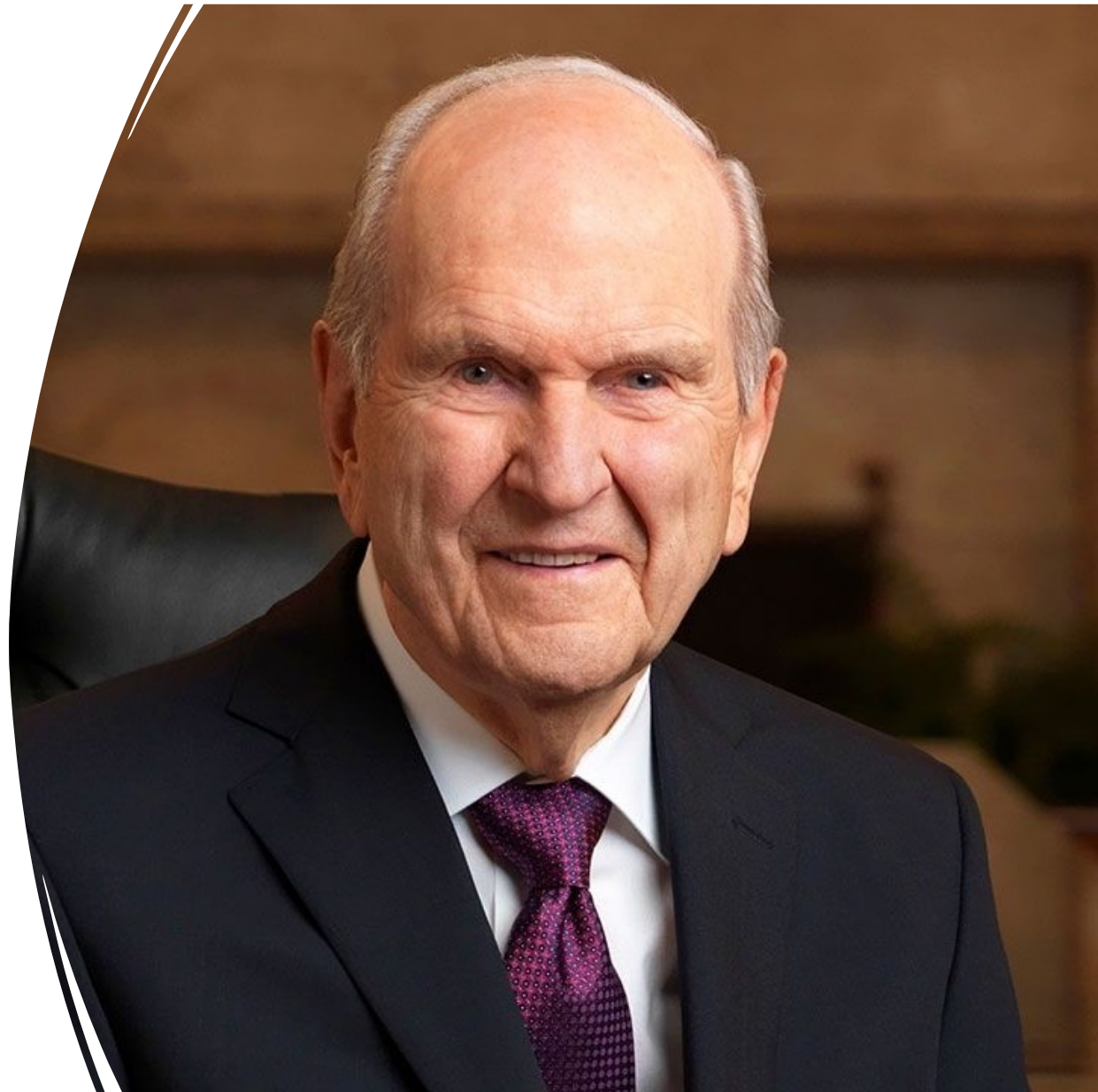
Elder David A. Bednar

What is Repentance?

- I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that ~~repenteth~~, **turns unto the Lord** more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. - Luke 15:7
- Yea, ~~repent~~ **turn unto the Lord** and be baptized, every one of you, for a remission of your sins; yea, be baptized even by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost. – D&C 33:11
- Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but he hath given it free for all men; and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade all men to **turn unto the Lord** ~~repentance~~. – 2 Nephi 26:27

What is Repentance?

The word for *repentance* in the Greek New Testament is *metanoeo*. The prefix *meta-* means “change.” The suffix -*noeo* is related to Greek words that mean “mind,” “knowledge,” “spirit,” and “breath.”





What is Repentance?

- Thus, when Jesus asks you and me to “repent,” He is inviting us to change our mind, our knowledge, our spirit—even the way we breathe. He is asking us to change the way we love, think, serve, spend our time, treat our wives, teach our children, and even care for our bodies.
- Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Discovering the Joy of Daily Repentance

- “How important is repentance? Alma taught that we should “preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord.” Repentance is required of every accountable person who desires eternal glory. There are no exceptions.”
- “Please do not fear or delay repenting. Satan delights in your misery. Cut it short. Cast his influence out of your life! Start today to experience the joy of putting off the natural man. The Savior loves us always but *especially* when we repent.”

- President Russell M Nelson (April 2022 General Conf)

Three Fundamental Truths

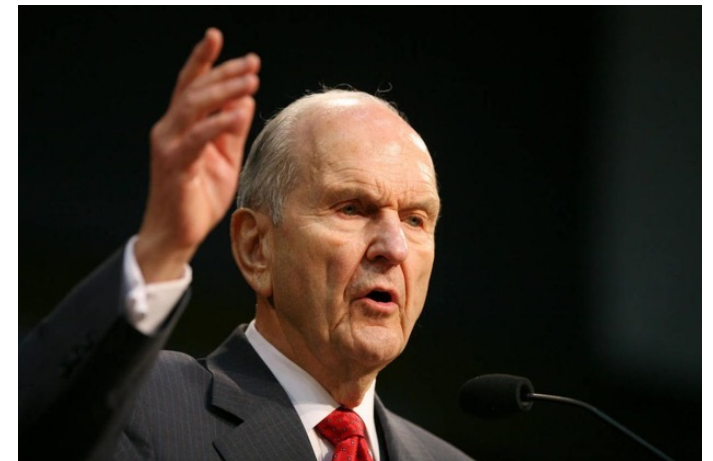
- 1) Repentance requires the Redeemer
- 2) Repentance requires an honest heart and real intent
- 3) Repentance, sacred covenants and ordinances, and the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost make it possible to always retain a remission of sins.



Elder David A. Bednar

A Call to Change

“Our thinking is simplified and focused as we keep our minds riveted on Jesus Christ. ... His is a call for each of us to grow spiritually, to strengthen our faith in Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, and to deepen our own conversion to the Lord. He is calling us to *do* better and *be* better than we have ever done or been before. We call that *repentance*. ... When we choose to repent, we choose to change!”



President Russell M Nelson

Sincere Repentance



“Pain is to our body what guilt is to our spirit—a warning of danger and a protection from additional damage. From the Savior and His Atonement flows the soothing salve that can heal our spiritual wounds and remove guilt. However, this salve can only be applied through the principles of faith in the Lord and repentance. The results of sincere repentance are peace, comfort, and spiritual healing and renewing.”

Elder David A. Bednar

Sincere Repentance

- “Therefore, repentance means more than simply a reformation of behavior. Many men and women in the world demonstrate great willpower and self-discipline in overcoming bad habits and the weaknesses of the flesh. Yet at the same time they give no thought to the Master, sometimes even openly rejecting Him. ***Such changes of behavior, even if in a positive direction, do not constitute true repentance.***”
- “Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation upon which sincere and meaningful repentance must be built. If we truly seek to put away sin, we must first look to Him who is the Author of our salvation.” – Ensign, Oct 1989



President Ezra Taft Benson

Specialized Care

“We all understand that certain physical injuries or illnesses require the specialized care of a qualified health professional. In like manner, serious spiritual wounds can be healed only with the assistance of a properly authorized servant of the Lord. Stake, mission, and district presidents; bishops; and branch presidents, acting in the authority of the priesthood keys they received when they were set apart, are commissioned representatives of the Redeemer, who provide ***essential help*** in the repentance and healing processes. These leaders are physician’s assistants who can diagnose spiritual illnesses and prescribe necessary medications and treatments.”

Elder David A. Bednar



Depth and Intensity of Repentance

“... the depth and intensity of repentance must match the nature and severity of a person’s sins.”

Elder David A. Bednar



“To every forgiveness there is a condition. The [bandage] must be as wide as the sore. The fasting, the prayers, the humility must be equal to or greater than the sin. There must be a broken heart and a contrite spirit. ... In short, there must be an overcoming of self, of sin, and of the world.”

President Spencer W. Kimball

Honesty in Repentance

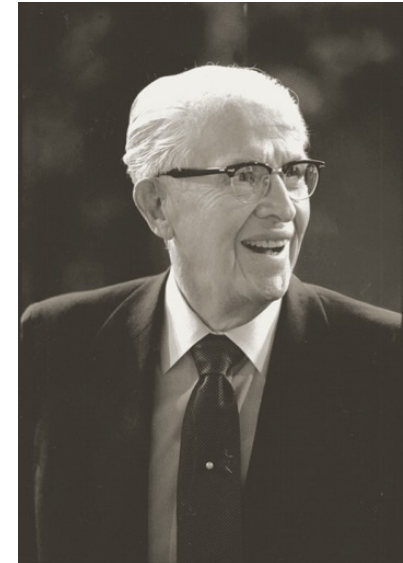
- “As we repent and turn to the Lord, it is important that we are ***honest with ourselves***. We must work to overcome the excuse making, blaming, and rationalizing that can divert us from truly turning to the Lord.”
- “And as we repent and turn to the Lord, we must have ***real intent and be honest with Him*** whose forgiveness we seek. Genuine confession to God, and when necessary to priesthood leaders, must be full and complete.”

Elder David A. Bednar

Requires a honest heart and real intent

Doctrine of Church Membership

“Behold, this is my doctrine—
whosoever repenteth and cometh unto
me, *the same is my church*’ [Doctrine
and Covenants 10:67]. To Him whose
Church this is, membership involves far
more than simply being a member of
record.”



President Ezra Taft Benson

Why do you think that being a member of record is not enough?

Becoming and Staying Clean

As members of the Lord's restored Church, we are blessed by our *initial cleansing from sin* associated with baptism and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. And that first blessing is magnified by the potential for an ***ongoing cleansing from sin*** made possible through the constant companionship and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost—even the third member of the Godhead. These joyous blessings are vital because “no unclean thing can dwell with God.”

Elder David A. Bednar



The Role of the Sacrament

“The act of partaking of the sacrament in and of itself does not remit sins. But as we repent, prepare conscientiously, and participate in this holy ordinance with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, the promise is that we may *always* have the Spirit of the Lord to be with us. And then, by the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, we can *always* retain a remission of our sins.”

Elder David A. Bednar



Spiritual Renewal

“Our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son do not intend for us to experience spiritual renewal, refreshment, and restoration just once in our lives as we are baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and are confirmed as members of the Lord’s restored Church. **Baptism by immersion, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the sacrament are not isolated and discrete ordinances. Rather, they are elements in an interrelated and additive pattern of redemptive progress. Each successive covenant and ordinance elevates and enlarges our spiritual purpose, desire, and performance.”**

David A. Bednar

Spiritual Renewal

- How do these ordinances elevate and enlarge our spiritual purpose, desire and performance?
 - ✓ Priesthood Ordination
 - ✓ Temple Endowment
 - ✓ Temple Sealing

The Sequence of Discipleship

“The sequence of discipleship is simple and straightforward: exercise faith in the Savior, repent, receive essential covenants and ordinances, change, strive to always retain a remission of sins, and press forward faithfully on the covenant path.”

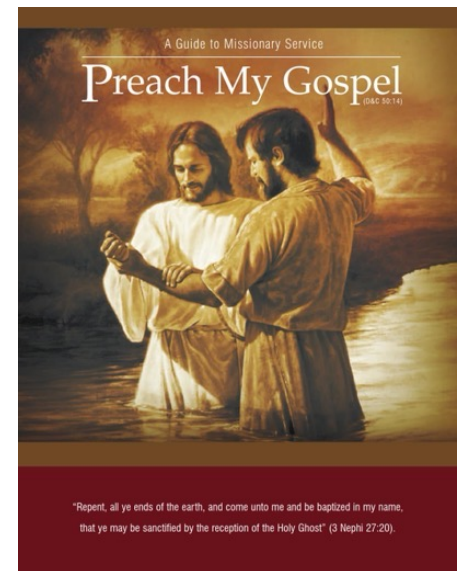
Elder David A. Bednar



Faith and Repentance

“Our faith in Christ and our love for Him lead us to repent, or to change our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors that are not in harmony with His will. **Repentance includes forming a fresh view of God, ourselves, and the world.**”

- Preach My Gospel, p. 62



Importance of Repentance

“Teaching repentance today is more important than ever as the ways of the world increasingly diverge from the commandments of God. For many, maybe most, deep conversion for the new convert is only beginning at baptism. Purposefully returning to God, honestly repenting, and feeling the love of the Savior through the gift of forgiveness before baptism brings the spiritual discovery alive in the life of the advancing convert and is ***vital to future faithfulness and more complete conversion.***”

Elder Neil L. Andersen

The role of Repentance in the Plan

“Repentance is not the backup plan;
it is the plan.”



Elder Neil L. Andersen

We must never short-change the teaching of repentance

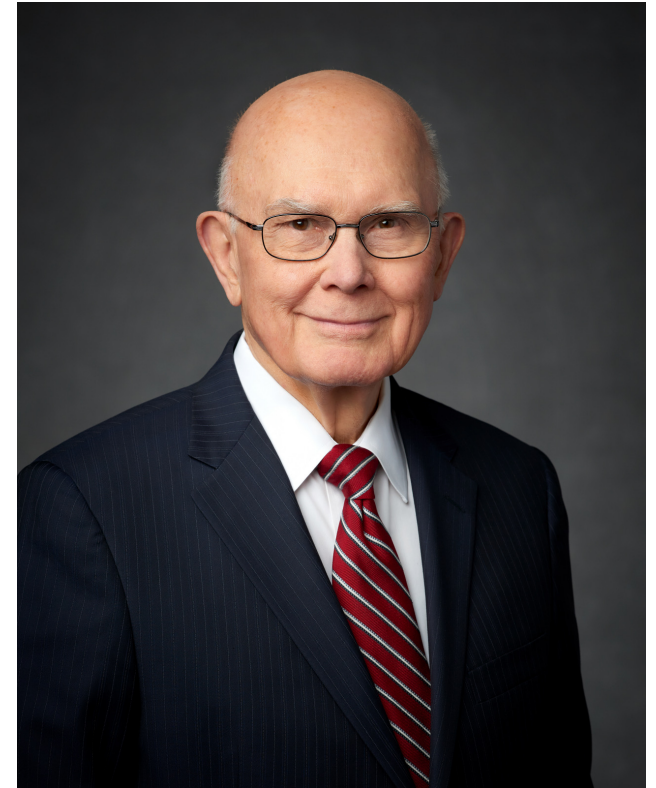
For each person, the repentance is individual, but it is universally necessary. “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23



The Power of Repentance

“When a person has gone through the [repentance] process ... , the Savior does more than cleanse that person from sin. **He also gives him or her new strength.** That strengthening is essential for us to realize the purpose of the cleansing, which is to return to our Heavenly Father.”



President Dallin H. Oaks

The Demands of Justice

“And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption.”

Alma 34:16

Confession

- “By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43)
- “I, the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me and ask forgiveness” (D&C 64:7)
- “When he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord for his sin . . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him [by sacrifice]” (Lev. 5:5–6; see also Num. 5:7–8).
- “And now, it came to pass that there were many who heard the words of Samuel, the Lamanite, which he spake upon the walls of the city. And as many as believed on his word went forth and sought for Nephi; and when they had come forth and found him they confessed unto him their sins and denied not, desiring that they might be baptized unto the Lord.” Helaman 16:1

Summary

- Repentance is a frame of mind, not a one time event
- Repentance is the path to a relationship with the Savior and creates loyalty between Him and us
- “Repentance is not a backup plan, it IS the plan”
- Repentance is at the core of becoming like Jesus Christ
- Repentance not only cleanses us, but gives us new strength
- Ongoing cleansing is made through the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost
- Unless we are regularly repenting and changing we cannot enter the Kingdom of God