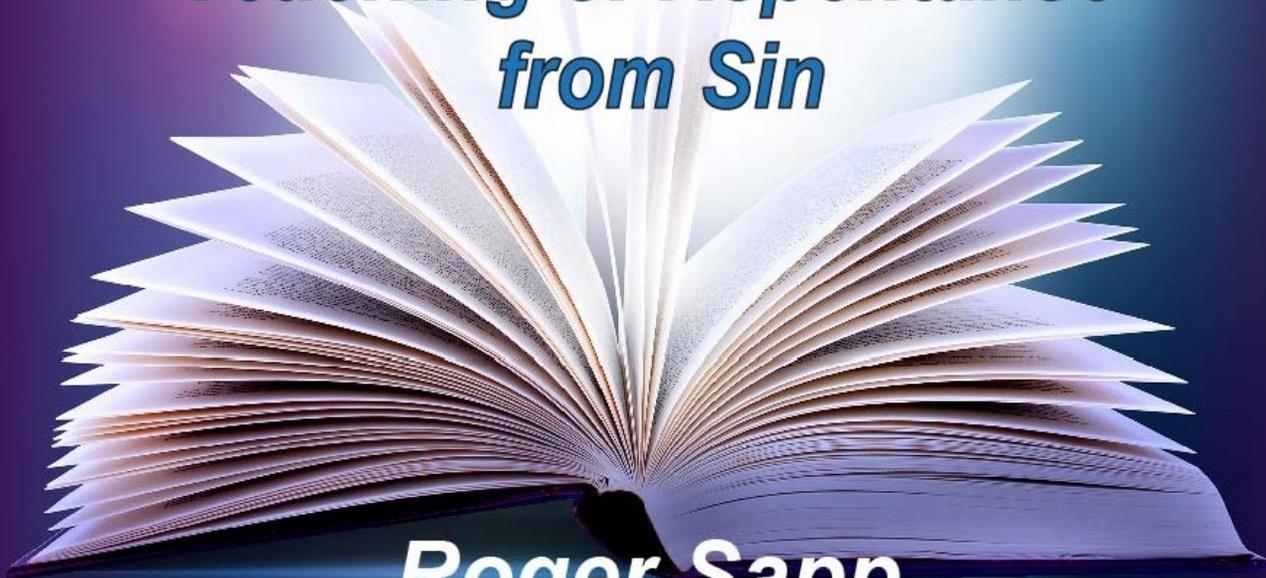


Grace in the Gospels 2

***The New Covenant
Teaching of Repentance
from Sin***



Roger Sapp

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Forward

Unlike the first book in this series that had many people involved in its creation, this book only had a few. My wife Ann was insightful as always as she reviewed what I had written. She offered excellent suggestions to me. Margaret Pinto, who has been called "the Grammar Queen" by her husband, also invested many hours fixing what was wrong technically with the book by applying American grammatical rules to what I had written. I much appreciate Ann and Margaret's help and encouragement.

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Introduction

Repentance is a Problem to the Narrow Gracers

The subject of repentance has been highly problematic for those who believe that God has already forgiven all sin and doesn't remember anyone's sins. It is a problem to those who believe and teach that repentance is necessary only once in each person's lifetime. These people have tried various methods to remove the whole idea of repentance from sin. For instance, some have declared the idea of repentance from sin to be a teaching of the Law of Moses and, therefore, not required by God any longer because of grace. However, those who know the New Testament well understand that this is false doctrine because of the many references to repentance from sin after Pentecost.

Additionally, some popular Narrow Grace teachers have resorted to improperly redefining repentance to shift people away from the idea that sin is the issue. They have taught that repentance means only "changing your mind" but not your deeds. However, this presentation of repentance is blatantly wrong and is contradicted repeatedly in the New Testament by Paul and the other New Testament writers.

Some have even asserted that repentance is not about sin at all. They assert that repentance actually means "changing your mind about grace." In other words, to these individuals, repentance does not require leaving behind a practice of sin; rather, repentance is simply agreeing with a narrow view of grace that allows them to remain spiritually irresponsible. Their "repentance" leaves people, claiming to be Christians, in the practice of sin while wrongly comforting them that they are forgiven automatically as they sin. This is a very unbiblical concept of repentance that the New Testament directly contradicts in many places.

One very popular Narrow Grace teacher from Asia, who is often on television, quotes a definition of repentance from Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. He writes:

"repentance"...according to Thayer's Greek Lexicon, simply means to "change one's mind."

This statement seems to be purposely misleading. This Asian teacher does not quote Thayer's full definition of repentance because it contradicts his teaching that repentance is not about sin. Here's the full definition in Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

- 1. to change one's mind, i.e. to repent.*
- 2. to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins.*

Abhorrence is a feeling of extreme repugnance, aversion and utter loathing. Therefore, according to Thayer's Lexicon, "repentance" means - in many contexts - "changing your mind to amend your lifestyle so that it reveals hatred of and aversion to sin."

The Narrow Gracers are operating out of a theological system. Like all reasonably convincing theological systems, each idea—each point of their theology—fits with all the other points. Scripture verses are then collected and interpreted in support of the system. The theological ideas of the Narrow Gracers all fit together in their thinking. However, these theological ideas have severe conflicts with portions of the New Testament. Once people are trained to think about things in the way that the theological system presents to them, they will have difficulties embracing conflicting biblical teachings—even if those teachings are completely true. Ongoing repentance from sin does not fit with the Narrow Grace theological system. Therefore, they attempt to explain repentance away and try to discredit every New Testament verse that does not fit their theological system. Narrow Grace teachers present grace properly as being "unmerited" but improperly as "unconditional." Ongoing repentance from sin is one of the biblical "conditions" of grace that they cannot fit into their theological system. Repentance - taught in the way that Christ and His apostles do - conflicts severely with the Narrow Grace theological system.

In order to deal with these conflicts with the New Testament, the Narrow Grace teachers have to discredit all (or portions) of the teachings of Christ and His apostles. They often use questionable interpretive methods such as declaring a single New Testament letter to have two audiences - Christians and unbelievers - with the author of the letter switching from one audience to another without commenting.

They reject all (or portions) of the teachings of Christ to His disciples by claiming that this is an expression of the Law of Moses. This is one of the reasons that their teaching is referred to as "Narrow Grace." They narrow the amount of New Testament Scripture that they will consider good for doctrine and they do so by a variety of questionable methods. Of course, there is an alternative to discrediting New Testament Scripture that does not fit into their theological system. They could humble themselves and realize that this theological system is severely limited and incorrect on many very important matters.

The Narrow Grace teachers encourage Christians to disregard the teaching of Jesus Christ -partially or completely - in the Gospels because they say it is "under the Law of Moses" and therefore does not apply in the age of grace. Taking this position marks them as cultic teachers. The first book "Grace in the Gospels" was written to show that this teaching is a serious error. It shows that all of what Christ teaches in the Gospels is an expression of grace and does apply to His disciples both then and now. This book is available as a free download on www.allnationsmin.org, as a Kindle book, and also as a printed book.

This second book was written for similar reasons. The teachings of Narrow Gracers have created the unwholesome situation where the eternal words of Jesus Christ to His disciples - in the Gospels - are seen as not applicable to Christians by these misguided teachers. Repentance from sin is one of the things that Christ taught and it is under attack by Narrow Grace teachers.

This second book is structured to first show that repentance from sin is vigorously taught by the Apostle Paul and the other apostles of Christ after Pentecost. Then this book takes the reader to the words of the Risen Christ after Pentecost, reveals His words about repentance and, finally, to the words of Christ in the Gospels about repentance. This book proves that repentance from sin is a New Covenant teaching of grace—both before and after Pentecost. Christ and His apostles, including Paul, do not have to resort to teaching the Law of Moses to teach repentance from sin. They teach it as part and parcel of the New Covenant grace lifestyle.

Casting doubt on the things that Christ taught His disciples is not only unwholesome, but it is an undeniable characteristic of cultic teaching. Repentance from sin is a necessary aspect to anyone who wishes to experience the pro-grace lifestyle and eternal life. This is a matter of ultimate importance. A gospel that excludes repentance from sin as an essential component of salvation is a false gospel and will not lead to eternal life.

Narrow Gracers and the Pro-Grace Lifestyle

Narrow Grace teachers often proclaim that believers can obtain a righteous lifestyle without believing in or practicing repentance from sin. The idea presented is this: if believers accept grace (as taught by the Narrow Gracers), this alone will lead to a righteous lifestyle. Then, taking this concept one step further, these teachers are actually telling believers that their way of achieving a righteous lifestyle is better than what Christ taught His apostles.

Christ taught repentance from sin. His apostles taught repentance from sin. Where there is failure to teach repentance from sin, there is failure in teaching the full counsel of the New Testament. Their teaching does not lead to the pro-grace lifestyle that Christ teaches His disciples. It leads to something much less. A failure to repent of sin creates a false Christian who claims "grace" but is not walking in true grace. It leads to Christians who claim forgiveness of sins but have not yet received forgiveness of sins. Faith in a doctrine of grace is not the same thing as faith in Jesus Christ. If we say that we believe in His cross, then it should follow that we believe in doing what He taught His disciples to do. Christ can only be a Savior to those who also see Him as Lord - the ruler - of their lives. Christ makes this clear when He says:

Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? (Luke 6:46)

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Chapter One

Paul Teaches Repentance from Sin

Repentance from Sin after Pentecost

There are many Narrow Grace teachers who wrongly assert that Paul did not believe that Christians have to repent of their sins. It doesn't take much study to determine that this is wrong. This chapter will not exhaust all the New Testament references that connect the Apostle Paul with his teaching and preaching repentance from sin. There is actually too much in Paul's own writings and in the Acts of the Apostles (which documents Paul's life) about repentance from sin to be able to cover it all in a single chapter. Nevertheless, this book will attempt to be faithful to what Paul teaches on the subject.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians that he mourned because many of them had sinned but not repented of their sexual sins. Many years after Pentecost, Paul wrote this to the Church in Corinth:

...I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced...(2 Corinthians 12:21b)

Paul told them that, if he came to visit them again, he would bring correction to those remaining in sin. Paul wrote:

...I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone. (2 Corinthians 13:2b)

Paul knew exactly what sin was without reference to the Law of Moses. Paul believed that Christians must repent if they were practicing sin. Repentance was an ongoing part of the pro-grace Christian lifestyle and not just a one-time act. In the situation above, it was sexual sin in the lives of Christians that Paul was confronting. It is obvious that Paul did not believe that sexual sin in the life of a believer was a non-issue (as some assert). Paul did not believe that merely having a correct view of grace would fix this problem. He believed—and taught accordingly—that ongoing repentance was necessary.

It was a very serious matter to the Apostle Paul when a believer continued to practice sin—a matter that required his correction. That believer needed to repent of the practice of sin. Paul believed that repentance required a change of one's behavior, not merely a change of mind.

Paul, again referring to the Corinthian Christians who were involved in sexual sin, speaks about their repentance from sin in his second Letter to that Church. He writes:

I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to

the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

Here Paul says that sorrow for their sins led them to repentance from that sin. Narrow Grace teachers assert that no Christian should ever feel sorry for their sins because they are automatically forgiven. They even teach that the Holy Spirit does not help a believer to know he has sinned. Paul contradicts those Narrow Grace teachings here (as he does repeatedly.)

Paul writes that their sorrow over their sins produced "a repentance" and that repentance led them to salvation. Repentance from sin saved these erring Christians. They fulfilled the condition of repentance from sin and were forgiven their sins. In contrast, it seems evident that Christians who are not sorry that they have sinned are not going to repent of their sins. If erring Christians will not repent of their sins, they will not experience salvation regardless of what the Narrow Grace theological system teaches.

Paul Commanded to Preach Repentance from Sin

Luke, the associate and traveling companion of Paul, records details of Christ's divine call of Paul in the Acts of the Apostles. Luke records Paul saying to King Agrippa what the Risen Christ had said to him. Christ said this to Paul:

"...for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." Acts 26:16-18

Paul describes what the Risen Christ instructed him to do as "open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God." A key word in what the Risen Christ said to Paul is "turn." It is another Greek word that is similar in meaning to repentance. It is "epistrepho" and it means "to turn" or "to return." To "turn" from "darkness to light" simply means no longer being involved in those deeds of darkness and, instead, practicing the righteous lifestyle that Christ taught in the Gospels. To "turn" from "the dominion of Satan to God" simply means to no longer allow Satan to dominate you through the practice of sin and to now allow the Lord Jesus Christ to rule over your life. The idea that Christ (or Paul) believed that a Christian could continue in the practice of sin of any type, while concurrently being turned to light and to God, is simply ludicrous.

In these verses, Paul affirms again that forgiveness must be received. He says "that they may receive forgiveness of sins." Paul does not believe that forgiveness is already given automatically, or without conditions. The condition of forgiveness that Paul reveals here is "turn from darkness to light" and "turn from the dominion of Satan to God." The condition of receiving forgiveness, as revealed by Paul, is repentance from sin. (The

author acknowledges strongly that faith in Christ is necessary as well.)

In the next two verses of the same passage, Paul relates how the Risen Christ's divine call affected his behavior. He said to King Agrippa:

(Paul preached) that they (Jews and Gentiles) should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. (Acts 26:20)

In the verse above, Paul makes "repent" equal to "turn." He uses both "turn" and "repent" in the same sentence. Earlier, he said "turn from darkness" and "from the dominion of Satan." Putting these phrases together, it becomes very clear what repentance means to the Risen Christ. To repent of sin is to turn from darkness and the dominion of Satan. It is not a one-time act. It is the ongoing lifestyle of a Christian. It does not happen automatically. It requires a believer to make a choice and maintain that choice against continuing to sin.

Paul contradicts the idea that repentance is simply a change of mind (and not behavior). In the verse above, Paul says that repentance requires performing appropriate deeds. Without deeds, there is no biblical repentance. It is not enough to change your mind about grace. You must change your behavior. You must not continue in sin. You must turn from darkness. You must turn to God.

Christ puts repentance - turning from sin - high on the priority list. Some popular Narrow Grace teachers have repeatedly told us that simply placing an emphasis on grace will produce a righteous lifestyle without teaching repenting from sin. They have chosen a different way to approach this matter than how Christ reveals to Paul. It will not produce the results that they claim. The Risen Christ places an emphasis on repentance from sin. Failure to teach repentance from sin will be a failure to do what the Risen Christ teaches.

Some Narrow Grace teachers have taught that no one can know what sin is without the Law of Moses. They often quote this verse:

"...for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20b)

The Narrow Grace teachers often assign a meaning to this phrase that is contrary to the New Testament. They teach that, if someone has knowledge of sin (are conscious of sinning), then they have submitted to the Law of Moses in some fashion. However, this narrow interpretation of this verse fails to account for Paul's listing of sinful practices found repeatedly throughout his writings. Paul knows what sin is. This theological system fails to account for the Risen Christ knowing what is righteous and what is wicked behavior and attitudes. Christ knows what sin is. Christ expects that those who wish to follow Him experience salvation by repenting of sin. Christ expects anyone who follows Him to be able to recognize sin.

Paul Writes that All Men Everywhere Should Repent

In another passage in Acts of the Apostles, Luke records the Apostle Paul saying that God is now declaring to men that they should repent. Paul says:

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (Acts 17:30-31)

Paul explains that men should repent because the Day of Judgment is coming when Christ will judge all. Paul believed that God was calling all men to repent of sin. Paul believed that no one would be prepared to face eternal judgment without repentance from sin. Paul writes again about this Day of Judgment in 2 Corinthians. Paul writes:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. (2 Corinthians 5:10-11)

Paul is writing this warning to the Christians in Corinth. He says that "we" (including himself) will "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Christ will recompense all - including believers - for "the deeds in the body" that they have done "whether good or bad." Paul says that knowing "we" will face this judgment of Christ should produce "the fear of the Lord" in believers.

Paul writes that believers should know the fear of the Lord. This contradicts the Narrow Grace teaching that believers should never experience any fear of the Lord. Paul agrees with Christ's teaching in the Gospels which is not surprising. Christ says:

"Do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28)

Not experiencing the fear of the Lord shows that a believer does not properly understand eternal judgment. It means that they do not understand what Christ and Paul have revealed in New Testament Scripture. In another place in the New Testament, Paul speaks of judgment to come. This is recorded by Paul's companion, Luke.

Felix...sent for Paul, and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. And as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time, I will summon you." (Acts 24:24-25)

Paul's message about "faith in Christ Jesus" involved him discussing "righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come." The content of Paul's Gospel message

frightened Felix. Faith in Jesus Christ does lead to righteousness before Christ but only if turning from sin is a part of that faith. Self-control is part of the pro-grace lifestyle of a repentant Christian. Without repentance from sin and ongoing self-control throughout the life of a believer, no believer will be prepared to face Christ in eternal judgment. Christians who remain in the practice of sin should be afraid. They should experience the fear of the Lord. Anyone practicing sin should be afraid to stand before the Risen Christ in judgment.

Belief in a theological system will not save you. There is a serious danger of putting your trust in a theological system that gives you false assurance of eternal life. We should have confidence before God only if we are trusting in Christ's sacrifice for our sins and have responded appropriately to grace by continuing to repent from sin. Failure to respond properly means that we do not have saving faith in Christ.

It is entirely appropriate to be afraid of a certain coming judgment if a believer continues to practice sin. Obviously, Christ will be aware of everything that we have done. Repenting from sin and performing deeds demonstrable of repentance is the wisest course for those who believe. It is the only choice that will lead to eternal life.

In another warning to Christians, Paul writes about judgment coming to those unrepentant Christians. To the Christians in Rome Paul writes:

We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things (the sins that Paul wrote about in Chapter One). And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness (goodness) of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds. (Romans 2:2-6) (Words in parentheses added by author for clarity)

Paul writes to the Christians in Rome that the judgment of God "falls rightly" on those practicing sin. He warns Christians that the person who is practicing sin (and judging others at the same time) will not escape God's judgment. Paul reasons that God's kindness, forbearance and patience ought to lead us to repentance. In the next verse, Paul says that an "unrepentant heart" stores up the wrath of God which will be experienced in "the day of wrath." Paul goes on to write that "every man" will be judged "according to their deeds." It seems evident from Paul that only those who repent and turn from their sins will be spared God's wrath. Paul does not believe that forgiveness is automatic, unconditional, or a permanent condition that never needs renewing. He believes that repentance from sin is necessary to receive forgiveness of sin irrespective of whether or not it is by a long-time Christian or a new convert.

Narrow Grace teachers often accuse other Christians of not "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." This is an arrogant accusation which implies that, somehow, they know how to handle Scripture better than other Christians. However, they often violate principles that they say they adhere to. They say that verses should be interpreted in-context but often fail to do so.

The phrase in the middle of the above-noted passage in Paul's Letter to the Roman Church is a favorite phrase of the Narrow Grace teachers. They often say "the goodness of God leads to repentance." However, they often quote this phrase out of its context and assign a meaning to this phrase that is not reflected in its original context.

Narrow Grace teachers say that this verse means that believers should not teach or preach repentance from sin because if we simply teach the goodness of God, then people will repent properly and adopt a righteous lifestyle. However, reading this verse in-context, it certainly does not mean what they say it means. It actually means the opposite of what they say it means. The entire passage is a very serious warning by the Apostle Paul about what will happen in eternal judgment if a believer fails to repent of sin. Consider the two verses that follow the phrase "the goodness of God leads us to repentance." Paul writes:

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds. (Romans 2:5-6)

Paul is warning believers about being stubborn about repenting of sin. He says that they have an "unrepentant heart." He says that unrepentant believers are "storing up wrath for [themselves] in the day of wrath." The "day of wrath" is a description of the Day of Judgment. It is followed by another description of this particular day. Paul writes that this day will be a "revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Paul also tells us that it will be our deeds that will be judged—not our understanding of grace.

The Narrow Grace teaching has been often called "the Paul-Only Gospel." This is because those who teach it often claim that they are teaching what Paul taught. However, they are not teaching everything that Paul taught and have a very different emphasis than Paul does. They have narrowed Paul's message and removed the messages of repentance and judgment to come.

In a very direct and uncompromising way, the Apostle Paul teaches repentance from sin. He does not assume that teaching grace alone will create a righteous lifestyle in believers. Paul does not soften or remove the message of repentance from sin or eternal judgment in order to teach grace. A grace message that excludes the importance of repentance from sin is too narrow. It is not the full counsel of the Lord. It will not lead to eternal life. It does not properly represent the teachings of Christ or His apostles. A message without repentance from sin and without reference to eternal judgment especially fails to represent the message of the Apostle Paul. Paul wrote:

Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. (1 Corinthians 15:34)

According to Paul, those who profess to be Christians while continuing to sin have no knowledge of God and should be ashamed.

No Christian need reference the Law or submit to the Law of Moses to know that they are sinning. The Risen Christ, the Judge of mankind, will not be ignorant of the nature of sin on Judgment day. He expects believers to be fully repentant on that day. The apostle Paul expects every Christian to know when they are sinning and to seriously repent of sin.

This chapter did not exhaust all the New Testament references that connect the Apostle Paul with his teaching and preaching repentance from sin.

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Chapter Two

The Other Apostles Teach Repentance from Sin

The Unity of Scripture

This book began with Paul's teaching of repentance because the Narrow Grace teaching presents itself as fully representing the teaching of Paul. As a result it has been called "the Paul-Only Gospel." Of course, what they teach does not represent Paul's teaching at all.

Those who have a proper view of the New Testament understand the truth of the "Unity of Scripture." This truth says that because New Testament Scripture is inspired and was all written to Christians for their instruction, that when it is properly understood, there is no conflict between Christian authors. The Narrow Grace teachers do not believe that this is true. They see conflicts between authors of New Testament.

They believe that Paul's message of grace conflicts with what Christ teaches in the Gospels. This seems to ignore the fact of two of these Gospels are written by close associates of Paul - Luke and Mark - decades after Pentecost and after long association with Paul. Clearly, these writers understood grace and yet do not record any instruction in their Gospels that believers should disregard anything that Christ teaches.

Many of the Narrow Grace teachers also see conflicts between Paul, Peter and John despite their acceptance of Paul's message as being like what Christ taught them. Their acceptance of Paul's message is revealed in the Letter to the Galatians. Paul writes about going to these apostles and consulting with them to see if his (Paul's) message was correct according to what Christ had taught them. This encounter gave Paul assurance that he had the correct message and had the approval of the first apostles of Christ. Paul describes the conclusion of this time by writing:

...recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas (Peter) and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (Galatians 2:9)

The "right hand of fellowship" was the three apostles' approval of Paul and the message that he was preaching. Those who try to imply that Paul, Peter and John had differing messages are simply wrong. Those that teach that Paul taught grace but Christ taught a mixture of both law and grace in the Gospels are making a grievous error. When properly understood, the message of all the New Testament writers are completely consistent with each other. All New Testament Scripture was written to Christians by Christians after Pentecost. All the writers understood grace. All of their writings are inspired and consistent with each other when properly understood.

Peter's Identical Teaching of Repentance and Turning

Not only did Paul believe that Christians needed to continue to repent of sin, but Peter also confirmed the same truth. Paul wrote:

(Paul) declaring...that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. (Acts 26:20)

This book covered this statement in detail in the previous chapter, but it is quoted again for the purposes of comparison with what Peter states. The Acts of the Apostles was written by Luke, a close associate and companion of the Apostle Paul. Luke records both Paul and Peter speaking several times about repentance and turning from sin many years after Pentecost.

Peter uses the exact same Greek word that means "to turn" that Paul used. Peter uses this Greek word in the exact same way that Paul used it. Luke records Peter's message to the onlookers after the man at the Temple Gate was healed. Peter's last sentence in that message is a summation of what he has been saying to these onlookers. This last sentence in the verse below reveals the same thoughts that Paul revealed about turning from sin.

"For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways." (Acts 3:26)

Again, "turning" is the Greek word "apostrepho." In this context, it is equivalent to the biblical concept of repenting from sin. After Pentecost, Peter states that Christ was sent to turn these onlookers from their wicked ways. Turning from their wicked ways is repenting from their sins. Peter does not say that you only have to repent once in a lifetime. He does not say that this no longer applies to Christians and that it is okay for them to turn back to their sins. Neither does Luke make an editorial comment that shows that repentance and turning from sin is only for unbelievers.

Earlier in that same message, Peter said:

"Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19)

Both words "repent" and "return" ("apostrepho") are used here. It is very clear that repentance and returning are conditions to having your sins wiped away and for having times of refreshing coming from the presence of the Lord. A person who continues in the practice of sin does not have his sins wiped away. Christians that do not practice ongoing repentance from sin - the pro-grace lifestyle that Christ teaches - will not experience the spiritual refreshing that comes from the Lord. Spiritual refreshing will come to confirm and strengthen a righteous lifestyle. It will not come to strengthen a lifestyle of sin.

Immediately after Pentecost, Peter explained to the onlookers what had happened and then preached about the crucified and risen Christ to them. They reacted to Peter's message about Christ by saying:

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

These people have just heard the Good News about what Christ has done for them. They want to know what the appropriate response is to the Good News. Without hesitation, Peter responded to this very appropriate question by saying...

"Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:37-38)

The only appropriate response to the Good News about Jesus Christ is to repent of sin. No one who rejects the repentance of sin will be forgiven. There should be no baptism for the forgiveness of sins if there is no repentance of sins committed. No one who continues to practice sin should be baptized. An unrepentant person - who is baptized - is a false Christian. No one will receive forgiveness, or the gift of the Holy Spirit, who has not also repented of sin. None of these things are automatic or unconditional. No Christian enters a state of permanent forgiveness for repenting once. Christians cannot continue in a sinful lifestyle thereafter, remain unrepentant and be forgiven by God.

In another situation involving Peter, a brand new Christian—Simon (a magician)—offered to buy the ability to impart the Holy Spirit. Peter reacted to this and strongly rebuked the man and then said to him:

"Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you." (Acts 8:22)

Peter believed that Simon must repent of the wickedness of trying to buy the Holy Spirit. It should be noted that Peter confirmed that forgiveness must be received again by praying to the Lord despite the fact of Simon already believing in Christ and having been baptized. This is consistent with Christ's teaching about asking for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer. Peter did not believe that Simon was automatically forgiven. Peter believed that repentance from wickedness and asking the Lord for forgiveness were conditions of receiving forgiveness in this situation. This event occurred after Pentecost and the same conditions for forgiveness remain today.

It is important to remember that Luke recorded these statements about repentance and turning from both Paul and Peter. Luke was a close associate with Paul, yet not once does Luke indicate any theological difference between what Paul and Peter are saying. There is no suggestion from Luke that there was an iota of difference in these two apostles' understanding of grace. This is simply because there was not any real difference in their understanding.

There are some who suggest that Paul understood grace, while Peter had a mixed message. These people are incorrect. They fail to note the similarities between Paul's and Peter's statements in addition to their use of the same key words regarding

repentance and turning from sin. Paul agreed with Peter completely. The Risen Christ taught Paul the very same things that Christ had taught Peter in the Gospels. The Narrow Grace teaching that Christ had a different message before and after Pentecost is simply not true.

In one of the letters written by Peter - written decades after Pentecost - Peter makes this statement:

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

The promise that Peter is referring to is the Second Coming of Christ. Peter reveals that the reason that Christ has not returned is that Christ is being "patient towards you." Christ is being patient with people who already know about Him. He is being patient with Christians. Christ is being patient with all Christians and unbelievers because He does not wish them to perish.

It is clear that the Risen Christ's condition for avoiding perishing is for all -Christians and unbelievers - to come to repentance. It is clear that repentance is an ongoing condition of salvation. Failure to repent of and turn away from sin results in perishing rather than receiving eternal life. This is true of those who presently know about Him and those who don't. No one enters a state of permanent forgiveness for repenting once. Christians need to maintain and practice repentance from sin, or they will perish just like unbelievers.

Writer of Hebrews Warns Believers About Sinning

God forgives sins and doesn't remember them anymore if we are not continuing to willfully sin. In other words, we have forsaken those sinful practices... we have repented of sin and received forgiveness. The writer of Hebrews states this by reviewing the words of the Lord in the Old Testament. He writes:

This is the covenant that I will make with them After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, And upon their mind I will write them," He then says, And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin. (Hebrews 10:16-18)

Only eight verses later in this passage, the writer of Hebrews says:

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.(Hebrews 10:26-27)

The writer of Hebrews was not confused and did not contradict himself. Nor did his audience change from Christians to non-believers as many Narrow Gracers teach. Every document in the New Testament was written after Pentecost by Christians for the

instruction of Christians. Every author of the New Testament was well-acquainted with grace—both as a doctrine and as an experience. No document of the New Testament was written—even partially—to unbelievers, Gnostics or substandard Christians.

No Christian should believe that the writers change audiences - from Christians to unbelievers or the reverse - in their writings. This is a way to disregard a verse read in its context. Despite the claim that the Narrow Grace teachers interpret verses in-context, they often will not accept a verse in its context if it disagrees with their theological system. They simply teach that the author changed audiences when they arrive at that verse. Despite the fact that the New Testament author was writing to Christians previously, Narrow Grace teachers state that the author unexpectedly, and without comment, changes audiences and proceeds writing to unbelievers. This is a dangerous way to disregard something that was written to Christians simply because it does not fit into their theological system. This idea of a change of audiences is a cultic interpretative method. It allows a false teacher to reject a portion of a writing that he cannot fit into his theological system.

If a verse does not fit into a theological system, the theological system is wrong. The verse is never wrong and always applies to Christians when properly seen and understood in its context. Theological systems are man's ideas about what inspired Scripture teaches. Theological systems must be adjusted in light of what Scripture teaches and not the reverse.

The writer of Hebrews is writing to Christians in every verse. He includes himself (and he is a Christian) in the above verse by using the inclusive personal pronoun "we." He writes: "If we go on sinning." The writer of Hebrews clearly means "If Christians, like you and I, go on sinning..."

All these verses found in between are full of inclusive personal pronouns. Verse 19 uses "we." Verse 20 uses "us." Verse 21 uses "we" again. Verse 22 uses "us" again. Verse 23 uses "us" for a third time. Verse 24 uses "us" for a fourth time in only seven verses. Verse 25 uses "our." In these seven verses, six inclusive pronouns are found.

These verses are also found in a context about the importance of Christians assembling together. Here are the two verses that appear just before the warning about sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth:

Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

This is clearly written to Christians about the importance of continuing to fellowship with each other, and so are the next two verses that say:

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

There was no change of audiences between these verses. Writers of letters do not change audiences and, if they did, they certainly would not do it without warning. They would not include themselves by using a personal pronoun such as "we" if what they were saying did not apply to Christians. Those that love the truth must reject such erroneous interpretative methods.

This verse, interpreted properly within in its context, does not fit into their theological system. It contradicts the narrow idea that God doesn't remember the sins of people who receive Christ and repent once. As a result, the Narrow Grace teachers must find a way to discard this verse. They state that it is not written to Christians. This is not convincing when this verse is studied in its context.

The writer of Hebrews is warning believers (and includes himself) about what will happen if a believer continues to sin willfully. It is obvious that God can—and does—remember the sins of believers if those believers continue to sin. Sins are not forgiven automatically or unconditionally. No one enters a permanent state of forgiveness for repenting once. God does remember the sins of unrepentant Christians, and their view of grace will not cause God to forget their sins.

The Apostle James reveals the same truth that Paul, Peter, and the writer of Hebrews teach. James writes:

My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.(James 5:19-20)

James refers to his readers as "brethren." In other words, he writes to his brothers and sisters in Christ. He writes to Christians. He uses the phrase "any among you," again, describing Christians. He describes a Christian who is "straying from the truth." No one is able to "stray from the truth" without knowing the truth initially. He is describing a straying and sinning Christian.

Then, James describes another Christian helping this straying Christian. He says, "one turns him back." James writes that another Christian helps the straying Christian "turn back." This is the same Greek word that both Paul and Peter use to indicate an individual turning back to God. The first chapter of this book, as well as this chapter, addresses both of these apostles using this particular Greek word. It means "turning away from sin and turning back to God." It has a meaning that is very similar to repentance from sin.

James said that the helping Christian will "turn a sinner from the error of his way." The Christian that has strayed from the truth must return to the truth. That straying Christian

has become a "sinner" again. Living in the practice of sin means that a Christian has strayed from the truth or simply has never really become a true Christian.

James says that "turning from the error of his way" will "save" the straying Christian's soul from death. The Greek word for "save" here is the word "sozo." "Sozo" is used quite often in the New Testament to describe eternal salvation. In other words, the erring Christian will not be lost eternally if he returns to God and to the truth.

James says that if the straying Christian returns to the truth that this "will cover a multitude of sins." In other words, the Christian will be forgiven the sins that he committed when he returns to God and the truth. James does not believe that forgiveness of sins is automatic or permanent in the life of a believer. James does not believe that forgiveness of sins is unconditional. In the case of a Christian who strays, forgiveness of sin has the conditions of repentance and returning to the truth.

James—like Paul and Peter—does not believe that a Christian can repent once and, thereafter, sin is not an issue. Repentance and turning from sin are lifetime conditions of salvation.

Don't confuse "unmerited" with "unconditional." Forgiveness comes by grace and is completely unmerited. It comes as a result of what Christ has accomplished at the Cross. No one earns forgiveness in any way. However, forgiveness is not unconditional. We must repent and forsake sin, confess and receive forgiveness—not just once, but as a continuing lifestyle. We must learn from Christ the nature of this lifestyle. He teaches believers the pro-grace lifestyle primarily in the Gospels and, also, in the Letters through the inspired writing of all the New Testament authors.

Past sins that believers have forsaken, repented of and confessed are completely forgiven and God doesn't remember them any longer. However, present sins that are not forsaken are not forgiven yet. Future sins are not forgiven yet, either. We have not yet committed future sins and, therefore, we cannot receive forgiveness of them.

Don't be fooled by the Narrow Grace teaching that "Sins are forgiven: past, present and future." It is simply not true. Forgiveness is not automatic. Forgiveness is not unconditional. God can—and does—remember sins that people are presently committing. Thankfully, He has provided a way for us to receive forgiveness.

Consistently, the New Testament reveals the eternal importance of repentance from sin. Finally, consider the words of the Beloved Apostle John:

And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. (1 John 3:5-7)

According to the Apostle John, Christ appeared to "take away sins." If we are "in Him," then there is no sin. We are justified by faith in Christ as we abide in Christ. However, according to John, if a Christian continues to sin, then this proves that he is not "abiding in Him." Furthermore, per the Apostle John, those who continue to sin have not "seen," nor do they "know" Him. John warns believers not to be deceived about this matter.

Paul, Peter, the writer of Hebrews and (now) John have all warned believers about continuing in a lifestyle of sin. Wise believers should be warned.

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Chapter Three

The Risen Christ Says Repent from Sin

In Chapter One, this book reviewed the ministry of the Apostle Paul as it related to preaching repentance from sin. In Chapter Two, this book explored what the other New Testament writers such as Peter, James, John and the writer of Hebrews wrote about repentance from sin. In this chapter, the focus is upon what the Risen Christ reveals concerning repentance from sin. Because the Risen Christ spoke to Paul about repentance from sin, it is appropriate to quickly review what Christ said to Paul. The Risen Savior said:

"...for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." Acts 26:16-18

Paul interpreted this call of the Risen Christ to mean that he should preach repentance. He wrote:

(Jews and Gentiles) should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance." (Acts 26:20)

Christ wanted Paul to preach repentance that performs appropriate deeds as part of the Good News. Any message that fails to place emphasis on repentance from sin is not the message that Paul preached no matter what it claims.

The Risen Lord Jesus Christ Speaks of Repentance

The Risen Christ appeared to two of His disciples on the Emmaus road and said to them:

"Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24:46-47)

Notice that the Risen Christ again confirms (as He did when He appeared to Paul) that repentance is necessary for the forgiveness of sins. Christ reveals that forgiveness is not automatic, unconditional or permanent. Ongoing repentance from sin is necessary for the forgiveness of sins. In this situation, the Risen Christ says that this is the message that should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations. A message concerning salvation that rejects or minimizes repentance from sin is a false gospel and will not lead to forgiveness of sins or eternal life.

The Risen Christ says Repent to Christians

In an attempt to reduce the significance of repentance, some Narrow Grace preachers have suggested that one-time repentance from sin is enough to satisfy God. However, the Risen Christ speaks to the Churches in the Revelation and says otherwise. The Risen Christ says to the Church at Ephesus to repent. When the Risen Christ is speaking to a Church, it should be obvious that He is speaking to those who are already Christians. He says:

"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place-- unless you repent." (Revelation 2:4-5)

Christ uses the word "repent" twice in these two short verses. These Christians have left their first love. They have fallen and need to repent. That repentance will require them to do the deeds that they did at first. In other words, repentance is (again) about a change of deeds. It is not just a change in thinking but a change of actions. If these Christians fail to repent, judgment will come and the Risen Christ will remove their lampstand. They will no longer be a light to the world. Repentance is necessary for Christians to remain a light to the world. Anyone who fails to repent is incapable of being a true light to the world.

A few verses later, the Risen Christ speaks to the Christians of the Church in Pergamum. The Risen Christ calls them to repent. He says to them:

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality. Thus you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth." (Revelation 2:14-16)

The Risen Christ says that there are some false teachings (that He describes as "the teaching of Balaam" and "the teaching of Nicolaitans") in this Church. He mentions that Balaam's teaching encouraged the Children of Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of sexual immorality. The teachings of the Nicolaitans apparently result in much of the same things as the teachings of Narrow Gracers. Christ says that these Christians must repent of teaching such things. If they fail to repent, then the Risen Christ will make war against them.

Obviously, the Risen Christ does not believe that sins are already forgiven automatically and without conditions. The Risen Christ is strongly against Christians committing acts of sexual immorality. Repentance is necessary from sin, or the Risen Christ will be at war with these, who confess to be Christians.

Repentance from sin will bring peace with Christ. Unrepentant Christians are at war with Christ, who will be their final judge. The Risen Christ will not always be patient with Christians as He waits for them to repent. They will not win or escape Christ's war with the unrepentant. The Day of Judgment will come. This knowledge of God should produce the fear of the Lord in every Christian who remains in the practice of sin.

In the same passage, the Risen Christ speaks to the Christians who are part of the Church in Thyatira. The Risen Christ says to them:

"I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds." (Revelation 2:20-22)

The Risen Christ says that this woman - who is falsely teaching and leading Christ's bondservants astray - has failed to repent despite Christ giving her time to repent. She will be judged by Christ because of this failure to repent. Those who commit adultery with her will also be cast into great trouble by the Risen Christ. The only solution for these Christians to avoid judgment is to repent of her deeds. The Risen Christ requires a change of deeds. This is Christ's understanding of repentance. It is not just a change of mind, as some teach.

The Risen Christ says to the Church at Sardis:

"Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you." (Revelation 3:3)

The Risen Christ is again warning Christians to repent. The failure to repent is compared with remaining asleep and unprepared when a thief has come. (This is very similar to Christ's teaching in the Gospels about His coming being like a thief in the night.) Likewise, Christ says to the Christians in the Church at Laodicea:

"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent." (Revelation 3:19)

The lukewarm Christians at Laodicea are loved, reprovved and disciplined by the Risen Christ. The appropriate response of these Christians to this activity of the Risen Christ is to repent of sin.

Of course, these verses do not fit with the Narrow Grace theological system. So, Narrow Grace teachers must find a way to dispose of these verses. They do it in a very unconvincing way. They state that this correction of the churches described in the

Revelation is only a "transition period" and that Christians need not be concerned about repentance today. Despite the fact that the Risen Christ spoke to Christians in the various local churches which existed in the first century *following* Pentecost, the Narrow Grace teachers still will not accept that Christians must continue to repent of sin.

Instead of adjusting their theology, again, they find a way to improperly dismiss a portion of the New Testament that disagrees with their theology. They dismiss the Gospels as "under the Law and, therefore, not for Christians." It is true that the Law is not for Christians. It is untrue that the Gospels are a reflection of the Law. They dismiss portions of Hebrews and First John as "not written to Christians." They dismiss portions of the Revelation as written to Christians but not for today." This is why they are "narrow" teachers. Instead of seeing the entire New Testament, including the Gospels, as an expression of grace, they narrow their acceptance of New Testament Scripture to only that which fits their narrow concept of grace. They even reject the words of Jesus Christ—both in the Gospels and in the Revelation—as applying to Christians today. Failing to follow Christ's instructions raises questions as to whether or not those who have embraced the Narrow Grace teachings are Christians at all.

The Book of Revelation Says More About Repentance

It is the Risen Christ that is showing the Apostle John all the events recorded in the Revelation. The Risen Christ reveals to John that some will not repent of their sins at the end of the age. It is clear that a change of views on grace will not be enough if they continue in sin. They will have to repent of sin according to the Risen Christ. Christ says to John:

The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.
(Revelation 9:20-21)

A portion of mankind did not repent of idolatry and the worship of demons. They did not repent of murders, sorcery, immorality or theft. They were not forgiven automatically or unconditionally. Their past, present and future sins were not forgiven. Changing your mind about grace is not enough. It is not biblical repentance unless you cease the lifestyle of sin and embrace the lifestyle of righteous behavior that Christ teaches in the Gospels.

Despite God's judgment on them, instead of repenting from sin, the Risen Christ reveals that these people (at the end of the age) continued in sin. The Revelation says:

Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the

God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds. (Revelation 16:9-11)

Twice in these three verses, Christ reveals to John that "they did not repent." The first thing that men did not repent of was "they did not give Him glory." The second thing that they did not repent of was "their deeds." In-context, this means they continued to do "sinful deeds."

It should be obvious to those who are honest in heart and seeking the truth that repentance involves more than changing your mind about grace. It involves a change of attitude and deeds. Beyond this, any honest person who seeks the truth will acknowledge that no one who is unrepentant of sin has received forgiveness of that sin. Sin committed by an unrepentant person has not been forgiven in the past, present or future. Sin has never been forgiven automatically or unconditionally. One-time repentance and accepting Christ will not be enough, either. Ongoing repentance from sin and ongoing experience of forgiveness is part of the lifestyle of true Christians.

These statements about repentance were made after Pentecost. Some of them were about repenting from sin at the very end of the age. It should be evident that, if what the Risen Christ and His apostles say about repentance after Pentecost is completely true, then what Christ says about repentance before Pentecost is also true.

Christ Teaches Repentance Before Pentecost

Hopefully, the reader can see that, if the Risen Christ expects Christians to repent from sin, then what Christ says about repentance from sin before the Resurrection is not to be disregarded as being "under the Law." In fact, what Christ says before Pentecost is essential in understanding the pro-grace lifestyle. Here are Christ's first words in His ministry, as recorded by Mark, the long-time companion of Paul:

He (Christ) was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him. And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:13-15, CR: Matthew 4:17)

In Christ's first utterance in preaching, He says "repent" and couples this with "believe the Gospel." No one can properly repent of sin without believing the Gospel. No one can believe the Gospel properly without repenting of sin. The two things are linked together forever and cannot be separated. Luke, another of the companions of Paul, records Christ describing His own ministry as calling sinners to repentance. Luke records Christ's words:

I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Luke 5:32

The obvious difference between the righteous and sinners is simply their relationship

with sin. Sinners are involved in the practice of sin. Sinners need to repent of sin. Righteous people are not committing sinful deeds any longer and, therefore, do not need to repent. Christians who do not resist temptation and enter into sin become sinners again and, as a result, must repent of sin in order to receive forgiveness and become righteous again.

In confirmation of these simple but essential truths, Christ teaches in another place:

There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Luke 15:7b

This seems rather simple, but Narrow Grace teachers have confused many. Believers who continue in sin have become sinners again and need to repent of sin. Christ is obviously encouraging His disciples to practice repentance as part of the lifestyle of grace. Several verses later, in the same passage, Christ confirms this same truth again. He says:

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. Luke 15:10b

Those who are committing sin are sinners and they need to repent of sin. Christ is certainly encouraging sinning believers to repent.

All of the New Testament encourages believers to repent of sin. Christ does. Paul does. Peter does. How important is repentance from sin to Christ? Christ says this to His disciples:

Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. (Luke 13:2-3)

Paraphrasing Christ in this passage, it reads like this:

Did these bad things happen to these men because they were worse sinners than others?" I tell you no, but unless you cease sinning, you will all -small sinners and great sinners- be eternally lost.

The point here is that not just great sinners need to repent, but all who commit any sin need to repent of sin (or they will perish). Repentance is a condition of forgiveness that is necessary of all people.

"Perish" is translated from the Greek word "apollimi" which means "destruction" and is often used to describe those who are eternally lost. It is used in the very familiar verse, John 3:16, and there it means exactly the opposite of "eternal life." Those who "perish"

are eternally lost. Repenting once will not change this situation. Those who continue to commit sin will be eternally lost. Christ says "repent" a second time in this passage. *"Do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."* (Luke 13:2b-5)

In this passage, Christ has twice connected "repent" with "sinners" and "culprits" and warned "you will all likewise perish." Christ says "repent" is a condition for not perishing. Obviously, Christ thinks that "repent" means "stop sinning." It means stop being a "culprit." Christ's message about repentance from sin is exactly the same before and after Pentecost. It is exactly the same before His cross and resurrection and afterward. This is consistent with the writer of Hebrew's proclamation about the nature of Jesus Christ. He writes:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

The Narrow Grace teaching that the message of Christ is compromised by either being a complete or partial expression of the Law of Moses needs to be rejected strongly. Christ is the same both before and after His resurrection. His message on repentance is exactly the same. Those who refuse to repent of the practice of sin will not experience eternal life. They will perish despite what popular Narrow Grace theological systems may say. Those who continue to live in will not experience eternal life.

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Chapter 4

Christ Reveals Future Judgment

Narrow Gracers teach that what Christ says in the Gospels is "under the Law." Therefore, according to these teachers, what Christ teaches is not for Christians today—either partially or completely. (This teaching was thoroughly shown to be false in "Grace in the Gospels," which is available as a free download on www.allnationsmin.org.) There are some impossible problems for Narrow Grace teachers to solve: the revelation of repentance as a condition of forgiveness *following* Pentecost and Christ's own statements about repentance from sin concerning events at the end of the age.

If Christ's teaching in the Gospels is not for Christians today (as is purported by the Narrow Gracers), then what about Christ's many statements about future events that would occur after Pentecost? Are followers of Christ to reject these statements also? Absolutely not! If these statements about the future are wrong, then Jesus cannot be the Son of God because His words would be untrue. If these prophetic statements are wrong, then Jesus cannot be said to be sinless since He would be making a erroneous, untrue and misleading statements. If Christ did not get it completely right concerning the events that were to happen after Pentecost, then He cannot save us from our sins.

If Jesus Christ "missed the mark" in what He taught His disciples about the future, or any other matter, then He cannot be the perfect, sinless Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Hopefully, the reader can see that rejection of Christ's statements about the future is not possible without rejection of what He accomplished on the cross for us. Christ's ability to make right statements about the future is linked strongly to His ability to die for the sins of others. These two things cannot be legitimately separated.

The Gospels Written Decades After Pentecost

The four Gospels were written decades after Pentecost. (They were not written before Pentecost when the events actually occurred.) The authors of all four Gospels were extremely well-acquainted with the teaching and experience of grace. Two of the four Gospel writers, Luke and Mark, were close associates of the Apostle Paul. They wrote their Gospels after knowing the Apostle Paul for a long period. There is no doubt that Luke and Mark understood Paul's message of grace extremely well when they wrote their Gospels. The Apostle John had met Paul and had approved of what Paul was teaching. (This is documented by Paul in the Book of Galatians.)

None of the four Gospel writers deemed it necessary to warn their readers that some of their writings were no longer applicable (or were not applicable to them, as believers). The reason that they did not warn Christians about this is because they believed that Christ's teachings were essential for Christians to practice. They believed that everything Christ taught His disciples applied to all people living under His grace. They believed that Christ taught the pro-grace lifestyle of Christians. The writers of the Gospels believed—correctly—that they should do what Christ taught. To the Gospel writers, there were no conflicts between doing what Christ taught and their own views of grace.

Christ Speaks of the Future Day of Judgment

In a serious correction of the lack of proper response to His miracles, Christ expresses very strong disapproval of three cities. Christ sees cities as groupings of people who live there—not just a geographical location with houses. Houses can't respond to Him, so common sense says that it is the people in the cities that He addresses. Matthew records:

He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."
(Matthew 11:20-24)(CR Luke 10:13-15)

Christ emphasizes the "day of judgment" twice in these four verses. The people in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum had seen many miracles and did not repent. As such, it will be less tolerable for them on the Day of Judgment than for other places that did not witness these miracles.

Christ says that the people in the city of Capernaum shall descend into Hades - Hell - because they did not repent. He draws a comparison between Capernaum and the Old Testament city of Sodom. Sodom was destroyed by God's fiery judgment for sin. God's judgment on Sodom was not an expression of the Law of Moses. The fiery judgment of Sodom occurred before the Law was given to Moses.

Christ says that it will be more tolerable for the people of Sodom than for the people of Capernaum in the Day of Judgment. The people of Capernaum had seen Christ's miracles and had more light but did not repent of sin. Repentance (in sackcloth and ashes, which represents humility) was the only appropriate response according to Christ.

Several popular Narrow Grace teachers tell believers that a permanent forgiveness of sins is received by repenting of sin once. In this passage, Christ compares the people of Sodom with the people who were hearing Him in that day. This includes believers today who are hearing Christ through inspired Scripture. It is extremely unlikely that Sodom would have avoided judgment if the people of Sodom had repented once of sin and then shortly gone back to their sinful practices. Neither will a Christian receive a permanent forgiveness of sins by repenting once and later returning to a sinful lifestyle. A Christian - who continues in sin - who is unrepentant will not avoid the fiery judgment to come. He needs deeply to repent of sin again and maintain that repentance.

Christ knows the future. He knows what will happen on the Day of Judgment. He knows what standards of judgment will be used. Christ knows that those who fail to repent of

sinful practices will not be saved. They will be lost. They will perish. He knows because He is, and shall be, the Judge of all humanity.

Christ is the Judge that Everyone Will Face

The Apostle Paul reveals to His readers that Christ Himself will be the Judge of "all." He includes every Christian in this judgment. Paul wrote:

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Paul tells "all" his Christian readers that "each one" of them will give an account of himself to God. He writes:

For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God. (Romans 14:11-12)

Again, Paul says that this judgment applies to everyone. It applies to "each one of us." He says that we will "give account" of what we have done.

It is not surprising that the Apostle Peter agrees with Paul and uses the same words about this matter. Peter says that all will "give account" to God on Judgment Day. Peter writes:

They shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. (1 Peter 4:5)

Paul reveals that it is to the Risen Christ that every knee will bow. It is also to the Risen Christ that everyone will give an account of himself. He writes:

At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11)

Christ understood - as He revealed in the Gospels in a variety of places - that He would be the final Judge of humanity. He knew the future and the details of the judgment to come and stated it repeatedly in the Gospels. For instance, Christ said that the Father had given all judgment to Him:

For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son... (John 5:22)

The Father has given all judgment to Jesus Christ. A few verses later in this passage. Christ describes how He will judge humanity. He says:

He (the Father) gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. (John 5:27-29)

Deeds are highly significant. Repentance is about a change of mind that will lead to a change of deeds. Evil deeds that are not forsaken are not already forgiven and will lead to a resurrection of judgment.

Witnesses at the Judgment Speak Against the Unrepentant

Again speaking of the judgment to come, Christ says that Old Testament peoples who repented of sin will be a witness against those who heard His preaching and did not repent. Christ says:

"The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. (Matthew 12:41-42) (cf: Luke 11:31-32)

Christ uses the example of Jonah preaching to the city of Nineveh as an illustration of the proper response to His preaching. God sent Jonah to Nineveh to cry against their wickedness. The Book of Jonah records God saying this to Jonah:

"Arise, go to Nineveh the great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me." (Jonah 1:2)

Christ says that the men of Nineveh repented (of their wickedness) when they heard Jonah. Because Christ is greater than Jonah, the people that heard Him should have repented of sin just like the men of Nineveh. Christ says that the men of Nineveh will be witnesses against those who did not repent at His preaching. This is a powerful warning to those who can now read the words of Christ, refuse to heed them and remain in the practice of sin. In judgment, they will be like those who heard Christ's words personally and did not repent of their sins.

Christ illustrates with another situation from the Old Testament. Christ says that the Queen of the South came a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon and that He (Christ) is greater than Solomon. Those that failed to take seriously Christ's teaching and commit themselves to doing it, both then and now, will be condemned by the Queen of the South at the Judgment.

Christ's prediction of future judgment is correct in every way. If Christ was in error in any statement about the future then He cannot be the Savior of mankind because He misled His disciples. Christ cannot utter something that is untrue.

Narrow Grace teachers accuse Christ of giving His disciples a confusing mixed message of Law and grace. These teachers are correct in teaching that Law should not be observed. However, they are incorrect about Christ's message being mixed. Christ's message is about grace entirely. They accuse Christ falsely, thereby influencing believers to doubt Christ's message—even to reject portions of His divine message. Anyone who creates doubt about Christ's message needs to be marked by Christians as a false teacher. Christ knows the future. He is not bound by a false theological system, nor is He bound to do what that system states. Christ will do exactly what He says He will do.

The Harvest at the End of the Age

In a passage where Christ teaches about the events at the very end of the age, Christ reveals a number of details about the coming judgment:

The harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. (Matthew 13:39b-43)

Those who are practicing sin are "stumbling blocks" who offend others. They will be gathered out of Christ's Kingdom and "cast into the furnace of fire." Christ will be their Judge. Christ will send forth His angels and they will remove those who are unrepentant and they will be cast away into the furnace of fire to suffer for eternity.

Being a "stumbling block" and practicing "lawlessness" are matters of deeds. These people, despite claiming to be Christians, will not be already forgiven past, present and future. If the phrases "stumbling blocks" and "those who commit lawlessness" are not entirely clear, Christ classifies these people as "the wicked" a few verses later. Christ says:

So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:49-50)

It is not possible to remain in the practice of sin, be wicked, and be saved eternally—all at the same time. Ongoing repentance from sin is an important condition of eternal salvation. Faith in Christ without ongoing repentance is not saving faith. Grace that does not produce repentance from wickedness is not saving grace. Christ cannot be incorrect about this and still be the Savior. He is completely correct. Any theological system that contradicts the Savior should be discarded.

Not Everyone Will Enter the Kingdom

Christ reveals, again, His knowledge of future events. In this passage, He speaks of the Day of Judgment as "that day."

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness'." (Matthew 7:21-23)

Here, Christ draws a distinction between those who simply call Him "Lord" and those who actually do the will of the Father. This distinction reveals the difference between a false Christian and a true Christian. A true Christian *does* the will of the Father (as taught by Christ in the Gospels).

Christ indicates that, on the Day of Judgment, there will be "many" calling Him "Lord" who did not do the will of the Father. This will be despite their claim to supernatural activity done in Christ's name. Christ does not deny that they used His name and did these supernatural works. He simply denied that He knew them. They were practicing "lawlessness" rather than doing what Christ taught His disciples to do. Christ perfectly revealed the will of the Father by His teaching and example. Those who fail to do what Christ teaches in the Gospels are failing to do the will of the Father.

Christ says that He will declare to them (as their Judge), "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." "Lawlessness" does not mean that they failed to submit to the Law of Moses. It means living without submission to the teachings of Christ in the Gospels. It means living without doing the will of the Father, as taught by Christ. It means failing to make Jesus the Lord - the Ruler - of your life by accepting His instruction to His disciples.

Christ's teaching is referred to as "the Law of Christ" by the Apostle Paul. This was discussed in Chapter 15 of "Grace in the Gospels." That chapter is entitled "Christians Should Not Be Lawless." (If you haven't read this book, it is available as a free ebook on www.allnationsmin.org. on Amazon as both a Kindle book and a printed book.) There are two varieties of law established in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul described Christ's teaching as a kind of law. For example, believers are admonished to

Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

Paul drew a distinction between the "law of Christ" and a second form of law. He wrote:

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (Romans 8:2)

The first part of this verse describes the New Covenant teachings of Christ. The second part of the verse describes the Old Covenant Law of Moses. The New Covenant does

not allow believers to live without restraint. It does not allow believers to be "lawless." The New Covenant requires repentance from sin. It requires "self-control" and knowledge of the eternal judgment to come.

Every word that Christ said in the Gospels will be used in eternal judgment to judge all. Christ said:

"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." (John 12:48)

It is simply impossible for someone to have forgiveness of sins as a result of the cross of Christ and, at the same time, reject Christ's teachings in the Gospels. They will be judged by His amazing teachings on the last day. A false teaching on grace will not justify them on that day.

Christ states very clearly the truth about the relationship between faith in Christ, obeying His teachings and eternal life.

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

Any "faith" in Christ that does not result in believers' obedience to Christ's teachings (as Lord) is a faith that will not save them. Put quite simply, it is not saving faith. Faith in a doctrine of grace (in a theological system) is not the same thing as faith in Christ. Those who subscribe to these false doctrines of grace may claim that they are saved, but the wrath of God abides on those who do not obey the Son.

Every believer can be assured that Christ does forgive completely the person who believes in His cross, repents of sin and seeks to live and grow in the lifestyle of grace that He teaches His disciples. No one does this perfectly. It is a matter of ongoing sincerity in practice and is never a matter of perfection of behavior. Ongoing forgiveness is available for the person who wants to do the right thing according to Christ's teaching. Ongoing forgiveness is not available for the stubbornly unrepentant—no matter what they believe.

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Chapter 5

Christ and Paul Warn About Inheriting the Kingdom

Christ Separates the Blessed from the Accursed

In another passage where Christ describes the future, He again states that He will be the final Judge of all humanity. Christ will separate the wicked from the righteous, just as a shepherd separates goats from his sheep. Christ describes the future by saying:

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Nations are made up of people. (Entire nations will not inherit the Kingdom.) Some of the people in those nations will inherit the Kingdom. Others will not. Christ indicates (in an unquoted portion of this passage) that those who will ultimately inherit the Kingdom are the ones who had taken care of Him in various forms of distress (such as hunger or nakedness). These people ask Christ to identify when they had taken care of Him. He says to them:

"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me " (Matthew 25:40)

In other words, those who will inherit the Kingdom have good deeds as a result of their faith in Christ (and not just a doctrinal belief about grace). True grace will always lead to a change of behavior and that will lead to good deeds. Christ also describes another group of people. This group of people will not inherit the Kingdom¹. He says:

Then He will also say to those on His left, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41)

Forgiveness of sins is neither unconditional nor automatic. If forgiveness was unconditional and automatic, then no one would be lost. However, Christ knows the future. He knows what will happen at the final judgment. Not everyone will be saved and will experience eternal life. Many will be lost and will spend eternity in eternal fire. Christ says to these lost people (in an unquoted part of this passage), that they failed to care for Him in His need. They react to this and ask Him when they failed to care for Him. He says to them:

'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:45-46)

Christ says that those who will be lost failed to take care of other people in serious need. They failed to have deeds that revealed their faith in Christ. They failed to have deeds that were in keeping with their repentance. The righteous will experience eternal life. The lost will experience eternal punishment in eternal fire.

We will not be saved by a false faith that has no deeds. We are saved by faith in Christ—but faith that has no deeds is not real faith. We will not be saved by a so-called "faith" or "grace" that allows people to remain in sin and have no deeds. Christians will not be saved by a false doctrine of grace that teaches that forgiveness is automatic and unconditional. These ideas are in conflict with Christ's knowledge of future events. They are in conflict with the One who is the Judge. He will do exactly what He says He will do despite what some may say about grace.

A key phrase in this passage is "inherit the kingdom." Christ says at the beginning of this passage:

Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Matthew 25:34)

The Apostle Paul uses this same phrase "inherit the Kingdom" three times in His writings. He uses it a fourth time in a slightly different form and says "inheritance in the Kingdom." In each of these statements that use this phrase, Paul is writing about eternal life in some way. In other words, Paul uses this phrase exactly the same way that Christ uses it in the Gospels. The context of one of these passages is the resurrection of the body found in 1 Corinthians Chapter 15. Paul writes in that chapter:

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Corinthians 15:50)

This meaning of "inherit the Kingdom" is strongly connected to "raised from the dead." Those who inherit the Kingdom will be raised from the dead to eternal life. This passage, and the phrase "inherit the Kingdom," is about eternal life—just as it is in the passage where Christ utters it in the Gospels.

Paul uses the phrase "inherit the Kingdom" earlier in the same book to the Corinthians. Paul writes:

Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Paul makes it clear that those who remain "the unrighteous" will not inherit the Kingdom.

Paul then restates this truth and describes "the unrighteous" in ten specific terms of sinful practice, at which point Paul says again that they shall not inherit the Kingdom. Those who remain in the practice of sin (who are unrepentant of sin) will not inherit the Kingdom. Paul says "don't be deceived" about this. People who remain in the practice of sin will not experience resurrection to life. They will not experience eternal life. Paul then encourages his readers that who *have* been washed, sanctified and justified in Christ (and in the Spirit). These believers remain no longer in the practice of sin and have experienced forgiveness.

Paul does not have to resort to the Law of Moses to know what is sinful and unrighteous. The knowledge of what is righteous and what is sinful is a work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. Christ knows what is sinful. Paul knows what is sinful. Believers should know what is sinful and they do not need the Law to tell them.

Believers reading this book should not allow themselves to be deceived by any teaching that reduces the importance of repentance. They should not be fooled by teachings that state that it does not matter what they do any longer. It does matter. The behavior of a believer has eternal consequences and does reveal if they are actually saved or simply trusting in a false concept of grace.

The Apostle Paul not only confirms the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ about this matter in First Corinthians, but he also confirms it in Galatians. Paul writes to the Christians in Galatia and says:

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

Paul uses the word "forewarn" twice in these three verses. He is warning his Christian readers that "those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." This time, Paul has fifteen sinful practices in his list. Paul does not have to resort to the Law of Moses to know what sin is. Those who remain in the practice of sin will not inherit the kingdom of God. Those who remain in sin will not experience resurrection to life. They will not experience eternal life. They will be eternally lost. Don't be deceived. Be warned.

Likewise, in a passage in the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul confirms this truth again. He writes:

For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:5-8)

Paul, once again, makes the important point that people living in sin do not have an inheritance in the Kingdom. They will not experience forgiveness of sins, or eternal life, without repentance from sin. Once again, he encourages his readers not to be deceived with "empty words" about this matter. He reminds them that the "wrath of God" comes to "the sons of disobedience" and believers are not to be "partakers" of sinful practices with them. Because Christians are now "children of light," they should refuse to partake of the darkness of sin any longer. Believers should "walk," or behave, as "children of light." Those who teach that "grace" means unconditional and automatic forgiveness without repentance from sin are speaking "empty words." Christians engaged in sin must repent or they will not inherit the Kingdom and experience eternal life.

A Summary of the Narrow Grace Theological System

This is a theological system that weakens the resolve of Christians to repent of sin. This is a theological system that tries to redefine "repentance" to mean something less than repentance from sin. This is a theological system that suggests that, when Christians become aware of sin in their lives, this is not a work of the Holy Spirit but a work of the Law of Moses. This is a theological system that accuses anyone concerned about repentance from sin of being a legalist. This is a theological system that resorts to cultic interpretative methods (such as teaching a change of audiences in the middle of a New Testament letter). This is a theological system that casts doubts on the eternal words of Jesus Christ in the Gospels and in the Revelation. This is a theological system that suggests that those who wish to follow the teachings of Christ to His disciples are not doing the right thing. This is a theological system that suggests that the inspired authors of New Testament Scripture are in conflict with each other. This is a theological system that suggests that Paul alone has the message of grace. This is a theological system that is offering a false hope of salvation and forgiveness.

The godly alternative to this false theological system is to believe in what Christ has done for you at the Cross and to repent of sin. To be a real disciple of Christ, you should emulate His first followers and submit fully to His teachings, as recorded in the Gospels. You should trust that all of the New Testament authors have something good to say to you that will increase the work of grace in your life. You should believe that all twenty-seven inspired writings in the New Testament were written to Christians by Christians for their instruction. You should submit to all the New Testament's teachings and be a real Christian.

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Biography of Roger Sapp

Roger Sapp received Christ as his Savior and Baptizer in the Holy Spirit in a Youth With A Mission coffeehouse ministry for American soldiers in former West Germany in 1972. For next twenty years his experience of physical healing was unpredictable, unreliable and mysterious. In 1993, he had a breakthrough that changed his understanding of healing by focusing him on Christ as the perfect example of healing ministry. Since that time, more than twenty-five thousand healings, deliverances, and creative miracles have accompanied his ministry

For the past fifteen years, he has been equipping other believers to do Christ-like healing. He is the author of ten books and many booklets and articles. His most popular books are [Performing Miracles and Healing](#), a comprehensive biblical guide to developing a Christ-like supernatural ministry, [Beyond a Shadow of a Doubt](#), a shorter book dealing with the doubts that block healing and [Paid in Full](#), a radical series of three books on grace in biblical finances.

His background includes the Eagle Scout award earned in his youth. He has served local churches as an elder, assistant pastor and pastor. He has been an Army Artillery officer, a prison, hospital, troop and pastor chaplain. He honorably retired from the U.S. Army in 1993 and was a theology professor until 1997. He holds earned Bachelor, Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Many have commented favorably on Dr. Sapp's relaxed style of ministry. He was frequently a guest speaker at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship. He has appeared as a guest on John & Carol Arnott's television program. He has been a guest on several national Christian radio programs including Sid Roth's Messianic Vision and his television program "It's Supernatural." He has spoken in more than 300 churches worldwide during the last two decades.

Dr. Sapp presently travels full-time in ministry by invitation of local churches, conferences and house churches. He is associated with and recommended by the leaders of several networks of churches. He has been happily married to his high-school sweetheart, Ann, for more than forty years. Ann, a registered nurse, has frequently traveled with Dr. Sapp. They and their grown children and their spouses live in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Dr. Sapp can be reached at 1-817-514-0653, All Nations Ministries, P.O. Box 620, Springtown, Texas 76082 USA, website: <http://www.allnationsmin.org> or by email at contact@allnationsmin.org.

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