

## Repentance leading to deliverance

Written by

Saturday, 17 April 2010 08:59 - Last Updated Saturday, 17 April 2010 09:07

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Devotional done by *by Paul Cook from <http://www.porn-free.org>*

<sup>3</sup>Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to

the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the

Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and

serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the

Philistines." <sup>4</sup>So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the

Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only. <sup>5</sup>And Samuel said, "Gather all

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Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." <sup>6</sup>So they gathered

together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the LORD.

And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the

LORD." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah. <sup>7</sup>Now

when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered

together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.

And when the children of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. <sup>8</sup>So the children of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry

out to the LORD our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines." <sup>9</sup>And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a

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whole burnt offering to the LORD. Then Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. <sup>10</sup>Now as Samuel was offering

up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel.

But the LORD thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel. <sup>11</sup>And

the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and

drove them back as far as below Beth Car. 1 Samuel 7:3-11 NKJV

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This passage powerfully demonstrates how God will help people that turn to him in true repentance. Repentance is something we need understand correctly if we hope to break free from the sins that hold us in bondage. Too often people turn back to God in false repentance and wonder why they aren't able to break free from sin.

Verse 3 contains specific details of the Israelites' repentance that God required. Specifically, here are the steps of true repentance:

### 1. Return to the Lord wholeheartedly:

Sin often wins portions of our hearts, such that returning to God with our whole heart is difficult.

Sex addicts struggle with cherished images in their memories, as well as current urges to act on their lust.

Their heart is divided between wanting to serve the Lord and wanting to fulfill the burning lust.

They feel powerless because part of them wants to fulfill the desires they know God hates.

The recovery process starts when the sex addict takes the divided heart, nails it all to the Cross, and asks Jesus in prayer to reunite the heart to fear God (Psalm 86:11).

This "heart healing" is one of the benefits of Christ's salvation for every person (Psalm 103:2-3).

### 2. Put away the idols:□

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Like Israel, sex addicts are deep in idolatry. Sexual images and thoughts compose the altars on which they worship. The sacrifices they make include time, energy, their bodies and resources.

The sinful memories and thoughts must be taken captive to the obedience of Christ and cast down (2 Corinthians 10:5). All of the physical sources of sexual idolatry must also be removed and/or destroyed.

See our page on [cleaning out the house](#) for helpful ideas.

### 3. Prepare your heart for the Lord and serve him only:□

This step is critical to secure deliverance. Whether God heals a person quickly or over a long period of time, he or she must prepare their heart for God and then start serving him. If a person succeeds in putting away the idols, but fails to prepare his heart for God's service, sin habits will undoubtedly return. Preparing the heart for God involves a daily surrender to Him, study of His Word in the Bible and diligent efforts in putting on the Christ-like nature. Serving God requires us to willingly surrender our body, soul and spirit for his purposes. It doesn't necessarily mean we must go into "full time" ministry as a pastor or evangelist or some other ministry position. Granted, some are called to that, but the majority of people will be serving God in the context of their secular job and/or role in life.

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If you perform the above actions to the best of your ability, I believe God will deliver you. God may deliver you in a manner different from the example in the above passage.

It is important to have faith that God will heal you and help you walk in obedience to him.

You must remember to do your part in the process and not feed the lust you are trying to extinguish.

God does not promise to put out the fire you keep feeding.

You can't bring the porn idols back out if you had a bad day at work.

You can't leave a little porn provision to reward yourself for a few days of good behavior.

If you allow any room for the sin to return, it will, and you will not find the deliverance God has for you.

### Questions for further thought:

- How does having a divided heart cause us to be tossed around like a cork in a stormy ocean? (James 1:6-8)
- When we won't put away our idols, what does that say about our devotion to God? To the idols?
- When you set out to live for God, how does the devil attack you? Can you see some parallels in the devil's tactics against you with the Philistines' attack on Israel?

### Prayer:

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“Heavenly Father, I confess that I have sinned through lust and sexual idolatry. I have made sex an idol in my mind and heart. Please forgive me for this. I commit to removing and/or destroying the sources of sexual idolatry in my life, as the Holy Spirit reveals them to me.

Please unite my heart to fear you, Lord, and obey your Spirit in removing these idols from my life.

I now offer myself, body, soul and spirit to you as an instrument of righteousness and not sin.

Please guide me in how to begin serving you in my life each day.

Thank you, Lord!

In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”