



Copyright © 2025 by Harold D. Thomas
All rights reserved worldwide.

This topical Bible study is for God's glory
and the spiritual enlightenment of the reader.

Content may be printed, shared, used for Bible studies
or sermons, and translated based upon these conditions:

- (1) It is made available for free and not sold in any format/medium.
- (2) A reference to www.UniqueBibleStudies.com is provided (so that others may find the website).

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.
Used by permission.
All rights reserved.

All words spoken by Jesus Christ are in **red text**.

(Hyperlinks are surrounded by parenthesis and are underlined.)

Those who by faith accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord have received a priceless gift—paid for by the blood that was shed by God’s Son as He died on the cross for our sins.

- “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23
- “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we having died to sins, might live for righteousness.” 1 Peter 2:24

As we seek and grow closer to God—and as we move from darkness and into His light—we discover our sinful nature (i.e. our flesh) often conflicts with His desires for our wellbeing. In addition, when we experience His grace, love and forgiveness for our sins, we also develop a heart-felt desire to stop sinning.

The word repentance is commonly defined as “turning away from sin.” However, repentance encompasses much more because it involves the crucifixion (or death) of our fleshly passions and desires...so that we may become the righteousness of Jesus.

- “Those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Galatians 5:24
- “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.” Colossians 3:5-11

The process of repentance may be divided into three sequential categories: awareness, confession and righteousness. Within each category are sequential steps that define the spiritual and behavioral transitions that occur when one repents. In addition, each step foundationally and synergistically supports the other steps that follow.

Awareness:

1. Recognition and understanding that a behavior (word and/or deed) is sinful.
2. An experience of emotional pain due to guilt, remorse and shame after the sin occurs.
3. Recognition and understanding of the various consequences of the sin.
4. A changing of the mind (despisement, disgust, hatred) towards the sin.
5. A growing desire to break free from the bondage of the sin.
6. A realization that they are unable to overcome the sin by their own efforts and must turn to God for forgiveness, guidance and assistance.

Confession:

7. A prayerful confession of their sin directly to God, a request for forgiveness, and a heart-felt plea for help.
8. God’s forgiveness of the sin (because of His grace and love)—combined with the influence of the Holy Spirit—then becomes a spiritual force that:
 - A. Strengthens the heart’s resolve in overcoming the sin.
 - B. Weakens the controlling power of sin by breaking the sin’s “chain of bondage.”
 - C. Provides guidance on how to escape. “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

Righteousness:

9. Desires identification of other types of sin by praying, “Search me, O God...and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24
10. Prudently identifies and avoids the “triggers” that have a propensity to initiate the desire to sin.
11. An indescribable feeling of joy, peace, praise and worship when the controlling power of the sin is replaced by spiritual strength and the righteousness of Christ.

It is very important to note that repentance does not earn salvation—but facilitates righteousness. In addition, some people think they need to “get their act together” by repenting from their sin before they turn to Jesus for their salvation. This misperception is not based upon biblical truth and is a delusional lie that is designed to delay a decision for Christ. There is nothing we can do on our own to make us more “acceptable” to God—for He is more interested in the desires of our heart than He is with all of our shortcomings.

It is also sad that there are people who claim to be a Christian, but have never repented from behavior that does not align with God’s word and His will. These are those persons who believe they are a Christian because they were “baptized” as an infant, or have attended church, or have read the Bible (or parts thereof), or have done “good deeds.” However, Christianity is based upon a heart that wants to know God; a desire to follow Jesus and become more like Him; a willingness to obey the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and a continual repentance of sinful behavior unto righteousness.

- “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17
- “The goodness of God leads you to repentance.” Romans 2:4
- “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.” Ephesians 2:10

Jesus declared:

- “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Matthew 7:13-14
- “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” Matthew 7:21-23
- “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” Matthew 7:24-27
- “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.” Luke 15:7

Stiff-Necked

Stiff-necked is an illustrative biblical term that describes the attitude of one who is obstinate towards God: determined, stubborn, inflexible, and difficult to lead. These are persons who are unwilling to submit to God’s will and guidance, and are unrepentant because they:

- Know their sinful behavior is against God’s will.
- Are held captive by Satan’s influence.
- Willingly sin because it is what they desire.
- Reject:
 - God’s word.
 - Christian assistance.
- Refuse to ask God for forgiveness.
- Develop a hardened heart because they must:
 - Justify their sinful behavior (via deceptual lies).
 - Find any means possible to repress their guilt, remorse and shame.



“Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” Ephesians 18-19

Here are biblical references to stiff-necked. Click on the scripture hyperlinks. ([Exodus 33:3-5](#)), ([Deuteronomy 9:6:10:16](#)), ([Nehemiah 9:16](#)), ([Acts 7:51-52](#)), ([Jeremiah 7:25-26](#)), ([Psalm 32:8-9](#)), ([Proverbs 29:1](#))



“But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” Ephesians 4:20-24

“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.” 2 Timothy 2:24-26

I pray you now have a greater understanding and appreciation of repentance, and you witness the blessings of your transformation into the righteousness of Christ.

All for His Glory!
Harold D. Thomas