



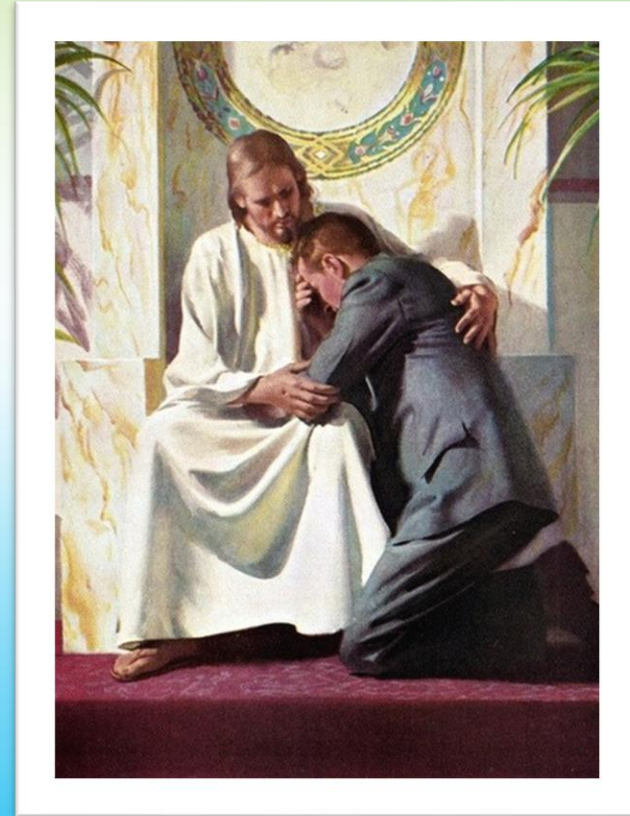
“TURN THEIR HEARTS”



Conversion involves stop fleeing from God and getting close to Him. Repentance is key in this process.

What is repentance?

Acknowledging our sins, being ashamed of them, asking God for forgiveness, and stop doing evil.



Which is God's role in our conversion?

➤ **God's desire**

➤ **God's grace**



Which is our role?

➤ **Repenting, returning, obeying**

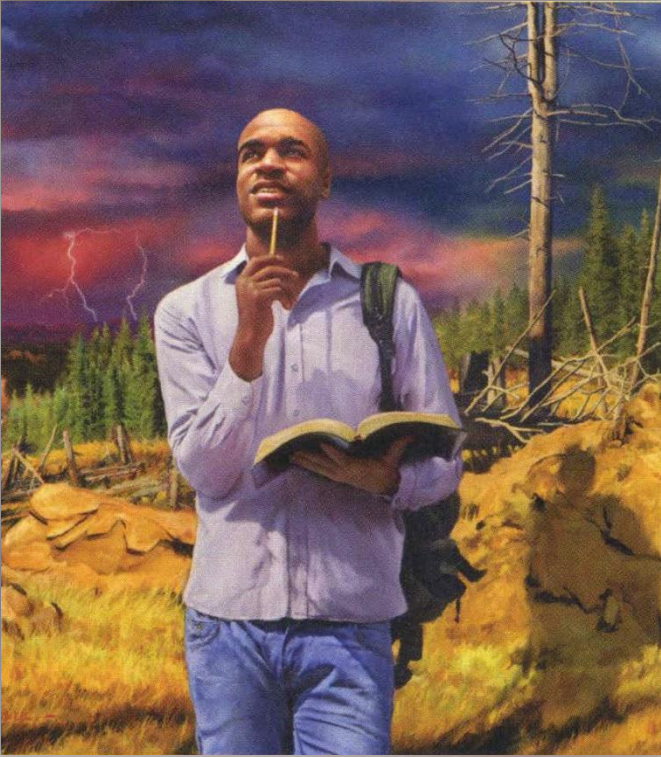
➤ **Coming to God with all your heart**



The call to repentance in the NT

GOD'S DESIRE

"Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" (Deuteronomy 5:29)



This verse begins with the idiomatic Hebrew phrase *Mi-Yitten* which is literally translated as “Who will give?”

It’s similar to “If only...” (see Ex. 16:3). It expresses the idea of a wish, of a desire, of someone wanting something badly.

God desires to see us coming back to Him, fearing Him, and obeying Him. Just because that’s the best thing for us.

He could force us to do so, but He doesn’t because He respects our free will. We are free to choose how to respond to the Holy Spirit’s call to repentance, and therefore to fulfill God’s desire or not.

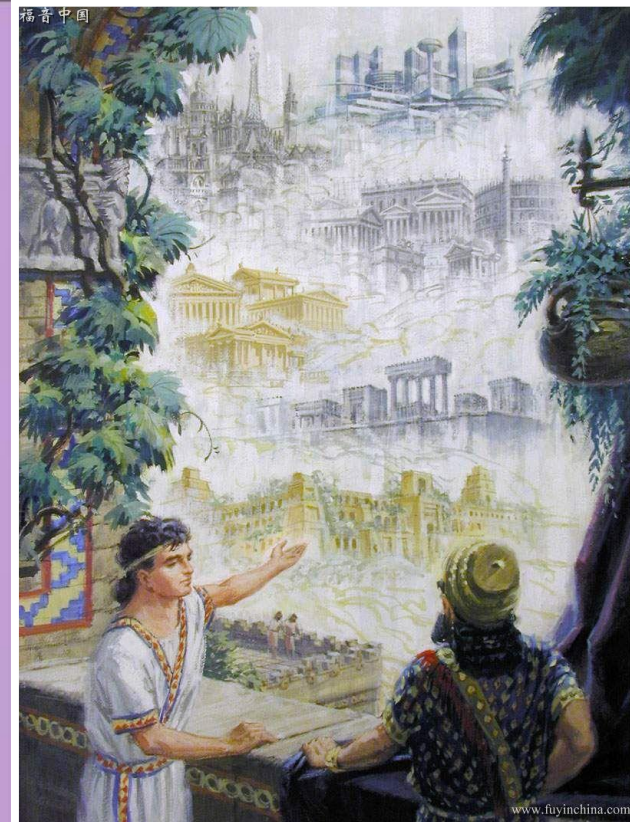
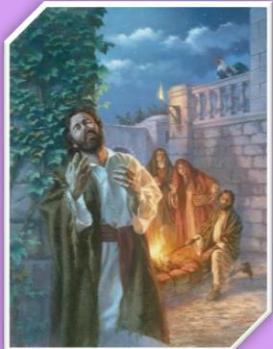
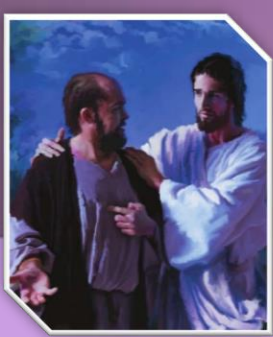
GOD'S GRACE

"But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deuteronomy 4:29)

God is able to perfectly predict what will happen to a person (like Peter in Mt. 26:34), to a nation (like Israel in Dt. 4:25-28), or even to global empires through human history (Dn. 2, 7).

However, His knowledge does not overrule any individual, national, or worldwide decisions. God just knows which decisions we're going to make. He still insists on urging us to make the right choice, to repent, and to come to Him.

God's grace is enough to forgive everyone who repents and wants to turn to Him.



REPENTING, RETURNING, OBEYING

“When [...] you take them to heart [...] and when you and your children return [...] and obey [...], then the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity [...]” (Deuteronomy 30:1-3 NIV)

The steps we must follow are listed in this quote from Deuteronomy:



OBEYING

Feeling deep sorrow for having sinned



RETURNING

Stop fleeing from God, and returning to Him



REPENTING

Abandoning sin and acting according to God's will

None of these steps is enough to forgive our sins or restore our relationship with God. That's God's work alone. These steps show our willingness to let God forgive us, transform our lives, and to make us His children.

COMING TO GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

"When [...] you take them to heart [...] and when you and your children return [...] and obey Him with all your heart and with all your soul..." (Deuteronomy 30:1-2 NIV)



God knew that Israel would disobey Him and that they would live in exile. Therefore, He wanted to give them hope (Deuteronomy 29:24-28).

They would receive His blessings again and come back to the promised land if they desired it with all their heart. That is, they just needed true repentance, and the ardent desire of returning to God and obeying Him.



When our souls long for God, He changes our hearts by "circumcising" them (Dt. 30:6). He makes us new creatures who are eager to serve Him (2Co. 5:17-18).

THE CALL TO REPENTANCE

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matthew 3:2; 4:17)

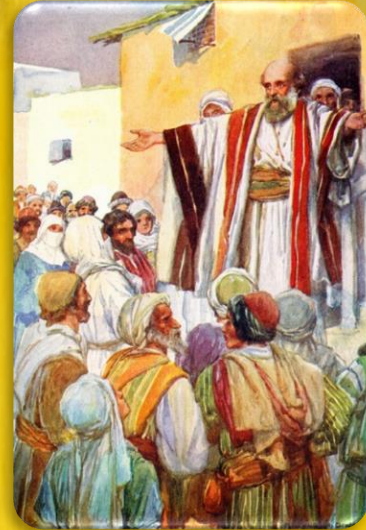
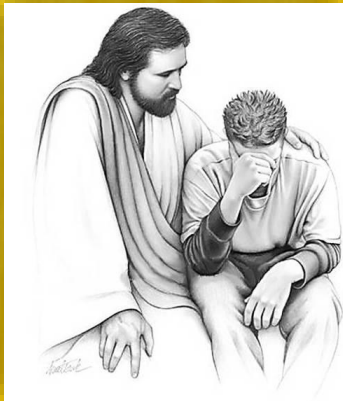
Both John the Baptiste and Jesus began their ministry with a call to repentance.



Repentance and Gospel are closely related (Mr. 1:15). After all, repentance would be useless if Jesus hadn't died for our sins to forgive them?

That's why Peter called the crowd at Pentecost to repentance: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38)

We are sinners, so we must repent from our sins, change our sinful habits, and choose to get away from them. God will give us a new heart (Ps. 51:10).



“And we cannot even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God [...] Repentance comes from Christ as truly as does pardon.

[...] His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew [...]”

E. G. W. (The Desire of Ages, cp. 17, p. 175)