

Episode 19

Music with a Message REPENTANCE

NARRATOR: Repentance is one of the first principles of the Gospel and is essential to our temporal and eternal happiness. It is a change of mind and heart that gives us a fresh view about God, about ourselves, and about the world. It includes turning away from sin, and turning to God for forgiveness. It is motivated by love for God and the sincere desire to obey His commandments.

SONG: Kenneth Cope, "Man to Man."

NARRATOR: Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, our Father in Heaven has provided the only way for us to be forgiven of our sins. Jesus Christ suffered the penalty for our sins so we can be forgiven if we sincerely repent. As we repent and rely on His saving grace, we will be cleansed from sin. When repentance is full and one has been cleansed, there comes a new vision of life and its glorious possibilities. How marvelous the promise of the Lord, "Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" [D&C 58:42]. The Lord is and ever will be faithful to his words.

SONG: Julie de Azevedo, "Mercy's Arms"

NARRATOR: To become free from the power of sin, we must turn to our Heavenly Father, pray in faith, and act as He asks us to. Repentance is an act of faith in Jesus Christ, an acknowledgement of the power of his Atonement. We can be forgiven only on His terms. As we gratefully recognize His Atonement and his power to cleanse us from sin, we are able to exercise faith unto repentance. Satan may try to convince us that we are not worthy to pray, that our Father in Heaven is so displeased with us that he will never hear our prayers. This is a lie. Our Father in Heaven is always ready to help if we will come to him with a repentant heart. He has the power to heal us and to help us triumph over sin.

SONG: Mindy Gledhill, "A Little More Like Thee"

NARRATOR: In order to be forgiven, we must first acknowledge within ourselves that we have sinned. If we are striving to live the Gospel, such an acknowledgement will lead to godly sorrow, which "worketh repentance to salvation" [1 Corinthians 7:10]. Godly sorrow does not come because of the natural consequences of sin, or because of the fear of punishment. Rather, it comes from the knowledge that we have, through our actions, displeased our Heavenly Father and our Savior. When we experience godly sorrow, we have a sincere desire for change, and a willingness to submit to every requirement for forgiveness.

SONG: Marie Pearson, "Lullaby for Me"

NARRATOR: Our goal surely must be forgiveness. The only possible path to that goal is repentance. For it is written, "there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. ... The Lord [will] not come to redeem [his

people] in their sins, but to redeem them from their sins. And he hath power given unto him from the Father to redeem them from their sins because of repentance” [Helaman 5:9-11].

SONG: One Clear Voice, "Change"

NARRATOR: Sometimes the steps of repentance are initially difficult and painful, like the cleansing of a soiled garment. Yet they produce purity, peace of mind, self-respect, hope, and finally a new person with a renewed life and an abundance of opportunity.

SONG: John Batdorf, "Don't you know"

NARRATOR: For your peace now, and for everlasting happiness, please repent. Open your heart to the Lord and ask him to help you. You will earn the blessing of forgiveness, peace, and the knowledge you have been purified and made whole. Find the courage to ask the Lord for strength to repent now.

SONG: Hilary Weeks, "Take Me There"

NARRATOR: In the anguishing process of repentance we may sometimes feel God has deserted us. The reality is that our behavior has isolated us from Him. Thus, while we are turning away from evil, but have not yet fully to God, we are especially vulnerable. Yet we must not give up, but instead reach out to God's waiting arm of mercy, which is outstretched all the day long [see 2 Nephi 28:32].

SONG: Mercy River, "The Flute"

NARRATOR: Michael Dowdle's arrangement of Come Unto Jesus underscores our parting message. Church members have a special rendezvous to keep. Nephi saw it, one future day, he said, Jesus's covenant people, scattered upon all the face of the earth, will be armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory. This will happen, but only after more members become more saintly and more consecrated in conduct. There are some tutoring lines in one of our favorite hymns. "Come unto Jesus, ye heavy laden, careworn and fainting, by sin oppressed. He'll safely guide you unto that haven where all who trust him may rest. Come unto Jesus, he'll ever heed you, though in the darkness you've gone astray. His love will find you and gently lead you from darkest night into day." If you would come unto Jesus, we must likewise yield to God, holding nothing back. The prophet Mormon declared that Jesus waits with open arms to receive us while the unrepentant and unconsecrated will never know that ultimate joy described by Mormon who know of what he spoke of being clasped in the arms of Jesus [see Mormon 5:11]. May God help us to so live now in order to merit that marvelous moment then.