

The Second Step Toward Freedom

Written by Bill Perkins

No spiritual stronghold will be destroyed until we let go of the sin it protects. Whether the sin is anger, bitterness, fear, despair, depression, dishonesty, lust, or a host of other sins Until we repent the sin will effectively resist all efforts to manage it. It will persist in the face of Bible study, prayer, therapy and self-help books.

As I noted last week, forgiveness is the first step toward freedom. Repentance is the second.

To Think Differently After

The word “repent” has a different meaning that most people suppose. It comes from the Greek word “metanoia.” This two-part word includes the preposition “meta,” which means, “after” or “with,” and the verb “noeo,” which means to “think” or “perceive.” And so the word means “to think differently after.” In the Bible repentance is often followed by a change in behavior. When we repent, we think differently than we did before we repented. Something happened that caused a change of mind and heart which resulted in a change of behavior.

A Lifelong Stronghold Destroyed

Seven years ago a life-long stronghold of fear was destroyed in my heart. In a moment of insight, I realized I had been believing a lie and decided to no longer allow it to remain in my consciousness. With the rejection of the lie, I determined to stop the behavior that flowed from it. Amazingly, from that day until this, I have not let that lie remain in my thoughts.

That was the beginning of a spiritual revival in my life that has not abated.

Twenty-Four Times

How important is repentance? The words “repent” and “repentance” are used 24 times in the Gospels. Jesus said, “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand” (Matthew 4:17).

We will not be free until we identify the lie we have believed and change our mind about it. We must repent. And we must follow that change of mind with a change of behavior.