

Repentance in the Word of God

Repentance, a Festival

There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine upright people who have no need of repentance. Lk 15

The Father's Welcome

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was convulsed with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms, and kissed him. Then his son said, *Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you: I no longer deserve to be called your son.* But the father said to the servants, *Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we had been fattening, and kill it: we will celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost, and now he is found.*

Lk 15

God's Encounter

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said: *Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I am to stay at your house today.* And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. *He has gone to eat at a sinner's house,* they said. But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, *Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone I will repay fourfold.* Jesus replied, *Today salvation has come to this house, for this man too is a son of Abraham.*

Lk 19

The Pattern of Christian Redemption

You were dead, through the crimes and sins which used to make up your way of life when you were living by the principles of this world, obeying the ruler who dominates its air, the spirit who is at work in those who rebel. We too were all among them once, living only by our natural inclinations, obeying the demands of human self-indulgence and our own whim; our nature made us no less liable to God's retribution than the rest of the world. But God, being rich in faithful love, through the greatness of the love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our sins, brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how extraordinarily rich he is in grace; because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything you have done, so that no-one can claim any credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus for the good works which God has already designated to make up our way of life.

Ephesians 1

Not our love, but God's

Love consists in this: it is not we who loved God, but God loved us and sent his Son to expiate our sins. My dear friends, if God loved us so much, we too should love one another.

1John 4