



The “3 Rs” Concept for Christian Living

Repentance—Resistance—Restoration

By Gerald E. Cumby

The 3Rs Concept (as in the letter R) refers to the foundational basic skills-oriented education program taught in most public schools as early as the mid-1800s. The concept centers on the three main elementary foundational skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic) being taught prior to the students moving into the more skilled and specialized level of education.

Although we know that two of the words (writing and arithmetic) do not begin with the letter R, the sound of the first letter in the phrase has a strong R phoneme (sound) at the beginning. It is best understood by observing the great educationalist’s, Louis P. Benezet, play on the “3Rs” concept. He claimed the “3Rs” should be “to READ”, “to “REASON”, and “to RECITE.” “Recite” meaning to speak the English language.

In the United States, during the 17th century, the curriculum in the common (elementary) schools of the New England colonies was summed up as the "four Rs" - Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic", and Religion.

All of the weekly lessons in our study will be promoting the Three Rs Concept designed to keep the Christian (you and me) on a solid foundation in:

- 1. LEARNING TO REPENT OF OUR SINS DAILY for a Better Foothold in Climbing to the Mountain Top Before We Reach Our Journey Home.**
- 2. RESISTING THE ENEMY’S STRONGHOLDS as We Walk the Trail Called “Life,”**
- 3. PREPARING FOR A TOTAL RESTORATION of Our Soul and Spirit (Becoming More Like Jesus).**

Week #1, Repentance—A New Way to Live

When someone has sinned (and all have), there is a time when we regret what we did. Usually it is within the first few days of committing the sin or sins. As time passes, thoughts only come and go of the sin. If it is an attitude sin, it is placed on the backburner and the sin is retained, but is not as prominent in our minds to ask forgiveness because of other things that are pressing in...overshadowing the past sin.

If it is a gross sin, it hangs on to our front lobe and dangles it out there where our conscience constantly reminds us of it. This takes its toll on our minds, will, emotions, and physical stamina and output. We need forgiveness and we don't want to admit it to anyone...especially a deep conversation with our God.

Repentance is the way to freedom. Repentance is probably the most rewarding area of response in our inner man (the soul and spirit). It is considered the most rewarding because it releases the captive and sets them free for a greater work for God's Kingdom on earth.

The definition of repentance is simple... the action of repenting; sincere regret or remorse. True repentance is a spiritual response and affects the inward parts of the whole person (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual). There really is no action that affects the whole person like repentance.

There was a 17th century famous pastor (Thomas Watson) that stated there were **SIX (6) INGREDIENTS for true repentance to be recognized by the "repentor", those seeing the change in attitude and gratitude of a person after repentance, and God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.**

I can barely boil water and be satisfied with the outcome. I certainly can't read a recipe with all the different ingredients and feel good about serving it to others...and especially to myself. I like myself...NO, I love myself. When I don't feel good about how something tastes, then my system cries, "Spit it out, Gerald, Spit it out!"

My wife on the other hand loves new recipes she will drum up for ourselves and guests. She can blend, mix, fix, and fluff up different ingredients and make it look and taste so pleasing. I work on cars, plant flowers, screw in light bulbs and pray for rain...but I let Mrs., Cumby do the cooking.

Incidentally, I do put cereal in bowls and pour on the milk! Even in that, I think Sherry's cereal fixed for me tastes better than mine. I look over at her and think, "Wow, what a woman God gave me."

Well, back to more spiritual things. Mr. Watson, the 17th Century Pastor, stated "True repentance is made of 6 ingredients for a perfect outcome of receiving total forgiveness of sins" that so easily beset us:

#1. SIGHT OF SIN.

What does this mean? Seeing the sin that has taken its toll on us as an ugly sore that keeps festering to the point of desperation in getting relief. The Holy Spirit is living in us if we have truly been saved. Just as the Holy Spirit convicted us the first time for our sins, He still is doing that as He lives in our "minds and heart." The ingredient is a must for true repentance of the sin that is taking its toll on us. The ingredient...**LOOKING AT OUR SIN FROM OUTSIDE IN AND THEN LOOKING AT THE SIN FROM GOD'S PERCEPTION.**

God hates sin. He says it over and over again in His word. In fact, "To fear God is to hate sin..." (Proverbs 8:13)...that should be our charge—Fearing God...Hating sin!

Do you see sin and want to throw up? You should feel that way.

#2. SORROW OVER SIN.

Some people are sorrowful over their sin "not because sin is sinful, but because it is painful." This is the element which is most easily observed and therefore most often counterfeited. As David cries, "The sacrifices of God are . . . a broken and contrite heart" (Psalm 51:17). Seeing someone cry and hurt over their sin is not a pass to forgiveness. You see, this ingredient is the element of lament for our sin as we see its effect on ourselves, on others, and on God. "Without genuine sorrow, sin will again raise its ugly head tomorrow." God will provide a way to forgiveness if the sinner's motives for sorrow over his or her sin is "pure and genuine."

God sees the heart of the sinner...God sees the heart of the "professor and confessor."

You can't outwit God. He knows you...and me...from our head to our toenails (including the inner you...body, soul, and spirit).

#3. CONFESSION OF SIN.

“Sorrow is such a vehement passion that it must vent. It vents itself at the eyes by weeping and at the tongue by confession.” (Watson).

- **Confession should focus on oneself and one’s own sin.**
 - ✓ ***It should not look to excuse, rationalize, or blame.***
 - ✓ ***Genuine repentance takes ownership of the pain that our sin has caused both in its particulars and generalities.***
 - ✓ ***Our confessions, while they do not have to go into exacting detail, must not leave grand portions of our sin concealed.***

“While preferred that confession is always voluntary on the part of the penitent, it is not uncommon for confession to flow from the fact that the Lord has graciously let us be caught in our sinful ways. However, if confession results only from the times that we are involuntarily caught in our sin, then this is no repentance at all.” (Josh Squires).

#4. SHAME OF SIN

The definition of SHAME is: a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior.

Sin’s definition is: Anything we think, say or do that breaks the heart of our loving God. (Child Evangelism Fellowship definition).

Reverend Watson says, “Blushing is the color of virtue.” All sin makes us guilty, and that guilt is only removed at the cost of the blood of God the Son (Jesus), Himself, who voluntarily took on flesh and lived a perfect life never once ceding to temptation, though tempted by the prince of lies himself. ***He voluntarily clothed Himself in that very sin and took on the wrath of God — hell itself! — at Calvary. If that does not make us ashamed when we sin, nothing will!***

May there be in our communities of faith more blushing and less boasting when it comes to sin. “I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens (Ezra 9:6).

#5. HATRED OF SIN

A direct quote of a forgiven and repentant Christian: “Christ is never loved till sin is loathed.”

- ***God’s anger burns at sin, and for those who do not trust in Christ alone for salvation, they will experience this firsthand upon death. It is not just a historical anger but an eternal one.***
- ***When we get angry at our own sin, we are reflecting something of God’s holiness and purity to those around. This hatred of sin in oneself, when genuine, is never too far from the surface. You will know it, you will smell it, you will feel it, and you will own it.***
- ***The freedom can only come to the repentant when he/she is washed and made whole by the blood of Jesus...and the tears flowing with the sorrow of understanding the cost of our sin.***
- ***When someone’s anger is focused primarily on others’ sins and not his own, it’s typically a sign that repentance is a mere performance.***

6. TURNING FROM SIN

- ***Repentance means little if it does not result in reformation.***
- ***This is the ingredient of repentance that takes the longest and can be the most excruciating for all involved.***
- ***Scripture tells us that we must not only repent but that we must also actively turn from the sins we commit ([Ezekiel 14:6](#)).***
 - ✓ ***If we repent without a sincere desire to keep from engaging in that same sin in the future, then one or more of the ingredients above are missing.***
 - ✓ ***If we turn from sin in our own strength, we will fail.***
 - ✓ ***We must yield ourselves and our efforts to God. True repentance gets God’s attention. He loves us enough as a Father to see make sure His children gain victory over “the sin(s) that so easily besets us.”***

When we repent we will then be REFRESHED and RENEWED to a new way to walking in the delight of God’s RADICAL Grace.

Repentance is a key part of the Christian life. It never feels good — and if it does, you’re doing it wrong — but it is necessary.

It’s what reminds us of our need for grace while displaying our growth in grace to the world around.

3Rs Concept

Some of the Weekly Titles to the Biblically Based Subject Matter will be as stated below:

- Restoring and Rescuing the Rebel in a Rebellious Society
- Rest, Relaxation, and Rewards for Running the Race with Minimal Regrets
- Resisting the Evil Influences in a Ruthless and Restless World
- Remember Your Reputation During a Tempting Relationship
- Regrets, Rejections, Reminders, Reform, and a Renewed Mind Are On the Access Road to the City of Restoration
- Rejoicing When You have been “Ripped Off” by the Rotten World of Racketeers
- Revival Will Bring Rain in the Dry Season and Rejoicing in a Rocky Relationship
- Reading and Riding a Horse at the Same Time Will be a Rough Ride for the Roughest, Toughest Rider. *(Yes...There are Scriptures Backing this!)*
- Roping a Reindeer Might Be Easier than Roping a Rhinoceros. *(Yes...There are Scriptures Backing this!)*
- Retiring, Refiring, Repairing, and Refining Are Positive Forces in Our Restoration Process for Living Life with a Robust Outlook.

Join us for a Ride of a Lifetime...Relying on Our Risen and Righteous Savior as He Refines our Lives for the Journey Heavenward!

Note: The 6 Ingredients for True Repentance is found on the website, “Recipe for Repentance”, desiringGod.org. It is an article by Josh Squires, who serves as pastor of counseling and congregational care at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina. He is a regular contributor to John Piper’s organization and publishing foundation, Desiring God Foundation. Source: desiringGod.org

John Piper is founder and teacher of desiringGod.org and chancellor of Bethlehem College & Seminary. For more than thirty years, he served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis. He is author of more than fifty books, and his sermons, articles, books, and more are available free of charge at desiringGod.org.