

Hosea 6:1-7:16

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[0:00] Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces, but he will heal us. He has injured us, but he will bind up our wounds.

! After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. Let us acknowledge the Lord, let us press on to acknowledge him, as surely as the sun rises he will appear.

He will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth. What can I do with you Ephraim? What can I do with you Judah?

Your love is like the morning mist, like the earthly dew that disappears. Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets. I killed you with the words of my mouth.

Then my judgments go forth like the sun. For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God, rather than burnt offerings.

[1:12] As at Adam, they have broken the covenant. They were unfaithful to me there. Gilead is a city of evildoers stained with footprints of blood.

As marauders lie in ambush for a victim, so do bands of priests. They murder on the road to Shechem, carrying out their wicked schemes. I have seen a horrible thing in Israel.

Their Ephraim is given to prostitution. Israel is defiled. Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people, whenever I would heal Israel, the sins of Ephraim are exposed, and the crimes of Samaria revealed.

They practice deceit, thieves break into houses, bandits rob on the streets. But they do not realise that I remember all their evil deeds. Their sins engulf them. They are always before me.

They delight the king with their wickedness, the princes with their lies. They were all adulterers, burning like an oven, whose fire the baker need not stir from the kneading of the dough till it rises.

[2:15] On the day of the festival of our king, the princes become inflamed with wine, and he joins hands with the mockers. Their hands are like an oven. They approach him with intrigue.

Their passion smoulders all night. In the morning it blazes like a flaming fire. All of them are hot as an oven. They devour their rulers. All their kings fall, and none of them calls on me.

Ephraim mixes with the nations. Ephraim is a flat loaf not turned over. Foreigners sap his strength, but he does not realise it. His hair is sprinkled with grey, but he does not notice.

Israel's arrogance testifies against him, but despite all this he does not return to the Lord his God or search for him. Ephraim is like a dove, easily deceived and senseless, now calling to Egypt, now turning to Assyria.

When they go, I will throw my net over them. I will pull them down like the birds in the sky. When I hear them flocking together, I will catch them. Woe to them, because they have strayed from me.

[3:20] Destruction to them, because they have rebelled against me. I long to redeem them, but they speak about me falsely. They do not cry out to me from their hearts, but wail on their beds.

They slash themselves, appealing to their gods for grain and new wine, but they turn away from me. I trained them and strengthened their arms, but they plot evil against me. They do not turn to the Most High.

They are like a faulty bow. Their leaders will fall by the sword because of their insolent words. For this they will be ridiculed in the land of Egypt. Thanks, Emily.

If you want to keep your Bibles open to those two chapters that have been read for us. Well, if you're just joining us this week, then we're working our way through the book of the prophecy of Hosea.

It's helping us, I think, get to grips with handling parts of the Bible that we may not know what to make of when we maybe read it or look at it, and we'd rather, you know, kind of read elsewhere.

[4:21] Hopefully we're seeing that understanding the historical context done by, you know, looking at some of the historical cues in the book itself, but also in the sort of other prophets and material that from the time round about, whether it's Amos or Isaiah, or from the history period in the Bible, we get clues to what was going on as a background at the time.

We've also seen how we need to try and get to grips with the different genre, even that there can be different genre within one book. And so we've seen here that there is a basic kind of true narrative about Hosea and his wife, which is true, but also aragorical.

It's two stories. And one, a true heart-breaking earthly story of a rejected husband and how that echoes the heartbreak of heaven and the divine story as the church of the time, the, you know, Israel, Ephraim, God's bride, is rejecting him.

And we've seen how the whole thing sort of links back and is framed within the covenant that God made with his people, the vows, the promises, the blessings, and the forfeits of keeping or failing to keep them.

And then how it all points forward, in a sense, to the need for Christ and how Christ fulfills all that is needed here, why he came and what he achieved for us, bringing wayward people like you and me back to God, but also showing us the folly of unfaithfulness.

[5:57] So in chapter one, we encountered God as faithful. In chapters two and three, God as redeemer. In chapters four and five last week, as judge. And here, in chapters six and seven, as omniscient, which is a fancy word for all-knowing and all-seeing.

And we're going to see how that plays out when it comes to the issue of repentance. So ultimately, the sort of big idea of these two chapters is that God sees through every fake repentance, fake, I'm sorry.

And true repentance is never presumptuous, mechanical, or half-baked. So last week, we were in the courtroom. The charges were read out. If you want to flick right just back to chapter four, verse one.

Here were the charges against Israel, against Ephraim, against God's bride. And, you know, hear the heartbreak behind them. But hear the words of the Lord, you Israelites. Because the Lord brings a charge.

And again, these are based on the covenant that God had established with them. The charge that God brings against you who live in the land. There's an internal set of charges. There's no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgement of God.

[7:07] Those are the kind of the vertical aspect of the Ten Commandments, if you like, which chapters, commandments one to four are about love for God, but that love is gone. And then verse two, the external aspects.

There's only cursing and lying and murder and stealing and adultery. They broke all bonds and all bounds. And bloodshed follows bloodshed. So those are to do with the second set of the commandments.

The horizontal love for neighbor is also gone. As people have walked away from the vertical, they're also walked away from the vertical implications of a relationship, a living relationship with God.

And then at the end of chapter four, verse 19, that God reminds them, unless they change direction, they will reap the whirlwind of their choices and of their sinfulness.

And of course, as we, through all of this, we've been saying that this is not coming from a kind of finger-wagging God, but from the broken heart of the lover of our souls, the lover of their souls, of the loving husband to his bride, breaking his heart over her departing of a father over his children.

[8:19] So here we are, chapters six and seven. And the beginning of the chapter looks hopeful, doesn't it? As we read verse one there, ongoing.

Come, Israel is saying, let us return to the Lord. He's torn us to pieces, but he will heal us. He has injured us, but he will bind our wounds. After two days, he will revive us.

And on the third day, he'll restore us, that we may live in his presence. Let's acknowledge the Lord. Let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear. He will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth.

But what does this all-knowing, all-seeing, omniscient God think of this? What is his verdict on these things? Well, it's verse four, isn't it?

Your love that you're proclaiming here, well, you and I know that it's like the morning mist, pops up in the morning, but quickly it disappears. In other words, he sees through it.

[9:25] Because God is the ultimate cardiologist, if you like. He sees the true state of our hearts before him. Every motivation, every intention, every dark secret.

He knows the truth. Nothing, as we were saying last week, can be hidden from the Lord. And we hear that repeated again and again in Scripture. 1 Samuel 16, verse 7.

People look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks where? He looks on the heart. Now, I don't know about you, but I'm already feeling the heat of conviction to my bootstraps that actually nothing is hidden from the Lord.

He knows everything that's going on in my heart, all my motivations. And there's so many other verses that speak into these, in this manner, whether it's Proverbs or Chronicles, Jeremiah, Kings, Thessalonians.

So what we're seeing, though, here is what looked hopeful is not. What at first glance looks sincere is not.

[10:29] It is a fake or untrue or insincere repentance. It's what Paul talks about, and we've talked about before, a worldly sorrow and not a truly godly one.

So here's the first issue here, then, that if we look at fake repentance, the field, the anatomy of fake repentance is presumption. And you kind of may be looking at this, how are you getting all this, Calvin?

Even what is the relevance for us today? Well, it's relevant because we need to know what true repentance looks like, what is acceptable to God in order to keep right with the Lord.

That we do not err, like the church in Hosea's day did, into fake repentance, into something that just keeps them in condemnation, not into the flow of forgiveness that God wants to offer.

And we'll see, I think, as we go on, it will help us to kind of, in situations where there are a breakdown, whether that's within a relationship, within a family or in a workplace or whatever, where true repentance is really required.

[11:43] Where the vertical relationship with the Lord and being true and right before Him will help shape the horizontal with one another when there is breakdown. So here, we see that in verse one, there is an acknowledgement of their situation, that the Lord has brought hardship.

Verse seven, there's an expression of acknowledgement of the Lord. But when you look at it, it feels transactional, doesn't it?

There's a great deal of presumption involved in it, verse one, yet, so we'll acknowledge it and He will do this and bind up their wounds. And that verse three is, the sun rises and He appears, like the annual rains, He will appear.

You see there's a sort of mechanical nature to it, like God is almost being treated like a slot machine. Put the right amount of expression of remorse in and out pops forgiveness, restoration after two days and so on, in verse two.

So what is the problem with presumption? Well, here, the problem, first of all, is that there is no mention of the sins of which they have been committing.

[12:58] Because probably, they have a glib view of it. You know, I knew a guy who was caught speeding, he paid the fine and the subsequent charges on his insurance, got caught again, paid the fine, got the penalties on his insurance and so on, got caught again, was banned.

Because he was wealthy, he just hired a driver for the year till the ban was over so he could get back to driving. You know, it's a trivial example, but here was the guy who had no remorse.

Sure, there was pain, sure, there were some consequences, but he didn't care, just carried on doing what he was doing. That's a trivial example, it might seem remote, but it's us when we stop and think about it, isn't it?

It can be us in the way that we can sometimes view sin. The things that we, because these are things that even though we know they're sins, we keep doing them.

We say sorry, but we're back to them again. We're not that sorry. Whether that's the way that we treat a spouse or a flatmate or a colleague or our online activity. Too far in a dating relationship or with alcohol or gossiping or obsessively fantasizing about a relationship with another person or gambling or laziness or gluttony or just bluffing our way through our Christian lives.

[14:20] And not just the sins of commission, but also the sins of omission, prayerlessness, scripturelessness in our lives, lack of faith or trust, lack of generosity to others, to the kingdom.

Kind of sorry, but not sorry. Take the consequences, but not really sorry for the sin. There's sorrow over the consequences it caught or convicted, but never over the sin itself.

The things that actually are truly grieving the Lord or the injured party or parties. And so true repentance and the benefits of it and its effects are withheld.

That lack of true repentance, the worldly sorrow that Paul talks about in 2 Corinthians 7.10 that ultimately, he says, leads to destruction.

It regrets being caught in the consequences but of the thing itself. Ah, you know, I mean, it wasn't that bad. Actually, it was quite good.

[15 : 26] I'm going to miss it for now. I'll take the hit for the moment. It is that kind of, you know, instead of the 180 degree turn away from sin that God requires, it's just a 90 degree turn with that eye still on it, still not convinced it was that bad.

We see the dynamics of these kind of things in Genesis 3, for example. Failing to take personal responsibility for what's going on.

It's the blame game can then come into the circumstances. When God approached them and asked what they'd done, Eve said, oh, it wasn't me, it was the devil that made me do it.

He gets to Adam. Adam says, well, actually, it was you really who made me do it because you were the one who gave me this woman who made me do it. And we might sort of think, well, I can't believe you do that but actually, when you stop and pause and think, don't we at times do that?

Oh, it's the circumstances, it's the, you know, it's marriages, it's workplace stress, it's my upbringing, it's my genes, it's whatever. And if not necessarily a glib view of sin, there's a rapid move to minimize it or to rationalize it, to bring a quick salve to our conscience.

[16 : 46] You know, sin is sin, right? Well, yes it is and no. It's clear there are sins that have greater consequences on this earth and also with a greater judgment.

Those who teach the scriptures, whether it's from the front here or in community groups or with our kids, those who are handling the scriptures, we're told that there will be a greater judgment on us because of the way that we handle the word of God.

Now, if I'm just a little unjustly grumpy with more, and that is poor and needs to be repented of and asked for forgiveness. But actually, if I fail morally raiding the church coffers and spending it on prostitutes, which some church leaders have done, and I'm found out, that's like a nuclear explosion, isn't it?

It radiates so many people. When we have a glib view of sin, when we minimize it, we can ignore its effects and not understand the true dynamics that are going on.

When we get to chapter 14, we'll see this again as the Lord presses home the issue. Chapter 14, verse 1 of Hosea, if you want to look it up, he calls on the people, return Israel to the Lord, your God, your sins.

[18 : 04] Your sins have been your downfall. The things that you've taken glibly, the things that you've kind of minimized, these are the things, ultimately, that you're not taking, so you're not repenting properly, truly before me, because you're not really that sorry.

And the forgiveness and the restoration of a relationship that I long to give to you is not being given, you remain under condemnation. See, true repentance starts with conviction and contrition, hating sin as God hates it, not just regretting the consequences.

So presumption has a glib view of sin itself. Also, secondly, it forces God into our box. But the truth is that it's this whole issue of forgiveness, it's God's, it's His mercy, it's His grace, it's His gospel to which we are to seek, not our terms, our mercy, our understanding, our gospel, our God in a box. We're to let God be God and be true to His words. Jesus illustrates this in Luke 18 in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector.

The Pharisee, confident in his own self-righteousness, God in His box, on His terms, comes in comparison with the tax collector who Jesus describes in this way in Luke 18.13.

[19 : 34] The tax collector, well, he stood at a distance. He could not even look up at heaven, but beat his chest and said, God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

He was letting God be God in his life, like God's opinion of his sin and his situation be the thing that defined the situation so that he couldn't even look up to God.

Such was his shame, understanding of the enormity of what he had done. When there's not a glib understanding and a true horror of sin hits home, there is internal devastation.

There may be quaking and just sickness to the pit of our stomach, disgust at our sin and the things that we have done and the way that it has grieved God. There's no presumption. There's a casting ourselves on nothing but the mercy of God.

All the excuses, all the pretense, all pride is gone. A broken and a contrite spirit casts itself on the Lord. And like the prodigal as he comes home, presumes, expects nothing, does not put God in a box.

[20:44] It's God's decision, God's terms, God's disciplines, God's timings, God's whatever. Because he is God and he knows my heart and he knows what is needed in my recovery, deliverance from sin and its effects.

Presumption puts God in a box. Thirdly, presumption depersonalizes God. A number of quotes from history in this regard.

The 19th century journalist Heinrich Heine, 19th century was the sort of beginnings and the height of German liberalism in Christianity. He famously said on his deathbed, oh, of course God will forgive me.

That's his job. But he depersonalizes, doesn't he, the Lord. Presumes upon, on the Lord, maybe because of no true knowledge of him or a liberalized view of the Bible where we talked about this last week, just cutting up bits of the Bible, ignoring what you don't like and just keeping what you do. Where religiosity, rather than true relationship with the Lord, is the state of affairs. And so there's not a true understanding of what it means to cast yourself on the mercy of God.

[21:55] And here, the northern tribes of Israel slash Ephraim are depicted rather than, you know, holding onto the horns of the altar.

They're on their beds wailing. 714, they do not cry it from their hearts but they wail on their beds. They can't even be bothered to get up and to seek the Lord.

And they slash themselves appealing to their, the gods, the bowels who required such thing for grain and new wine and for them to turn away from me.

It was the false gods who asked them to slash themselves. The true and the living God sought just a true cry of the heart. And here, the fruit that proves the repentance was fake comes to the fore because the original charges in chapter 4, verse 1, still stand.

So rather than the flow of forgiveness, there is the maintaining of condemnation on them until they come to true repentance and into true understanding.

[23:06] The four devastating pictures expose their heart as the charges remain. Chapter 1 from chapter 4, verse 1, seen in chapter 5, verse 4, that there is, chapter 6, verse 4, there is no love.

It's vaporous. It flees like the morning mist burnt by the sun. You wonder whether, you know, what was the condition of the understanding of the time? Was it a sort of religious nationalism?

Claiming fidelity to God in what might suit their political agenda but down the pub on Friday night getting blundered. Claims to kind of genuine faith that were nothing other than words, no reality.

But the words of the God who sees all and knows all in verse 5, pierce through it all.

And the second charge still remains. Again, chapter 4, verse 1, but here in verse 6, there's just no acknowledgement of God's. This is possibly, you know, the best known, associated with this, is the best known verse from the whole of Hosea.

[24:11] God says, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. An acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings. What does he mean there? He says, he wants to pour out his grace on true repentance rather than just the lamb being mechanistically tossed on the altar.

There you go. Faithfulness, loving relationship with God rather than religiously offering up burnt offerings. Sorry, but not really sorry.

Token offerings. No real sorrow over sin. Sorry for the consequences. Paying the price but not really accepting the heartbreaking aspect of it before the Lord.

Hosea's contemporaries also speak into this at the same time, Amos chapter 5 verses 21 to 24. The Lord says through Amos, I hate, I despise your religious festivals, your assemblies are a stench to me even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I'll not accept them.

Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs, I will not listen to the music of your harps, but let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream.

[25:25] In other words, be rid of the immorality and corruption in the church. Isaiah chapter 1 verses 11 to 17, verse 11, the multitude of your sacrifices, what are they?

Says the Lord. I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and of fatted animals. I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling in my courts?

Stop bringing meaningless offerings. Your incense is detestable to me. New moons, Sabbaths and convocations, I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. And then verse 16, so wash, hear what he's longing for, wash and make yourselves clean.

Take your evil deeds out of my sight, stop doing wrong. Let righteousness flow like rivers. Verse 17, learn to do right, seek justice, defend the oppressed, take up the cause of the fatherless, and plead the cause of the widow.

And then Psalm 51, 16 and 17. through David, the Lord says, you do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

[26 : 49] And then the third charge still remains, as in chapter four, verse one, here in verse seven, as unfaithful, unfaithful to the covenant, like their forefather, Adam.

We already talked about their antics. What is needed is a new covenant head, isn't it? A better Adam who will come and redeem them, and he is coming. And then verses nine to eleven, false teaching or no teaching leads the priests and the people alike to scheme evil acts.

And so therefore we see something of the anatomy of an unrepentant heart and the fruit that comes from it. But then the Lord brings these four images to expose the heart of the unrepentant.

Speaking to the heart of the church, four images of oven, bread, dove, and boat. And he lays out what he requires, chapter six, verse 11.

Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people, whenever I would heal Israel, the sins of Ephraim are exposed, the crimes of Samaria are revealed. See, God wants to deal in reality, in the light.

[28 : 03] And they want to keep things hidden in the dark, minimize them. Oh, you know, God can't see them, God doesn't mind, God doesn't know, God's not powerful enough really to do anything about it. Forgive me, that's his job.

But chapter seven, verse one, they keep practicing deceit and thieving and conniving. Chapter seven, verse two, not realizing that all the time the Lord remembers their evil deeds.

They're always before me, he says. But why do they continue? Verse four, they're all adulterers, a reference to actual as well as spiritual adultery.

And then the first image, like a burning like an oven, hearts, desires that just consume them. Sin has intoxicated them. Leaders are caught up in their drunkenness in verse five and led into treachery and mocking and smoldering ambition, literally assassinating the leadership, verse seven. You can read all about that in second Kings chapter 15, where king after king is pulled down in the northern tribes. After six months, one month, two years, sin's chaos gripping their hearts, like burning ovens just consumed with their own desire and ambition.

[29 : 23] There's no evidence of true repentance with their ongoing ugly intentions, no restraint in their lives. Intrigue, literally lying in wait, verse six, representing a conniving heart.

It is all superficial. There is no inward reality. Then verse eight, the second image, that of a flat loaf not turned. You know, in our day, a fan oven does not require the turning of a cake or whatever, but ancient oven, that wasn't so.

If it wasn't turned, it would be half baked, scorched on one side and then not cooked on the other. And what is the root issue? Well, he tells in verse 10, it is arrogance, too proud to cast themselves upon the Lord, but rather happy to be weakened by their sin and their own logic and their own strength.

Verse nine, alliances made with other nations are weakening them as the protecting powers upon whom they rely rather than the Lord extracts a heavy price. It's unrepentant sin, leaving them conniving, arrogant.

And verse 11, senseless like a dove. Now, obviously a dove is usually a thing of peace, but not here. They're senseless. They're bird-brained, in other words. They have no real discernment.

[30 : 37] Their sin has kind of made them mad, unable to kind of discern before the Lord the way that is required. Going one way with Egypt and then another with Assyria, they're unstable.

And then the final image, verse 16, is the faulty boat. Useless, even dangerous, trusting in a device that does not truly work. The key idea of that is they're insolent, there's no humility.

Verse 15, they've rejected, actively rebelled against their helper. And in that state, sadly, the Lord's judgment will come on them. Though he longs for forgiveness to flow, their unrepentant hearts, he's still disciplining and forcing them to go into exile, longing that they would return.

Because as he says, verse 12, the net, which will be the Syrian army, will come and capture them. These are really heavy verses, aren't they?

And hopefully we're kind of getting to grips with what's going on. But here, God's heart, in the midst of it all, in verse 13 there, I long to redeem them.

[31:49] But they speak about me falsely. I long to redeem them. But they have a false, half-baked, mechanical, presumptuous notion of the gospel.

There is no gospel at all. It cannot save, but it helps and keeps them remaining in condemnation. And again, skip to chapter 14 and you get a sense of this.

Verse 1, hear the Lord's cry, return Israel, return to the Lord your God, your sins have been your dying fall. Take words with you and return to the Lord, say to him, forgive all our sins.

There you go, acknowledge them and receive us graciously that we might offer the fruit of our lips. I will heal their waywardness, love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.

all of this that is happening is in a sense on the macro scale. But how does it work out on the micro?

[32:52] How do we know that our hearts, or the hearts of another, where there has been sin, are truly repentant, and need to truly repent? Well, the truth is that the Lord is the only one who truly knows the hearts, because there are, of course, clever and deceitful people who seem really plausible.

But what do we need to do? How can we find true repentance? What does it look like? Well, Darby Strickland recorded a really helpful piece for the CCEF website, our podcast.

CCEF is Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation, and she was talking about, in particular, the context where a spouse has been aggrieved by another, but I think it could apply wider.

And she starts out in the podcast with Zacchaeus in Luke chapter 19, and the nature of his repentance, spontaneous, it was radical, not only the money giving back to those in wrath, but four times the amount, half his possessions to the poor.

It was deep, honest, it was sincere, it was acknowledging the true reality of what he had done and the implications of it. And she said he looked very different after it.

[34:14] Let me quote her. When someone has godly sorrow, there's going to be an evident change in both the way that they're thinking and the way that they're behaving.

Godly sorrow is always directed by and towards God. And it's going to produce these outward and inward changes that are unrecognizable in terms of who they were and who they now are.

And then she gives us six things to look for in oneself or in another. Firstly, that they or we recognize that the offense is against God first and foremost.

And as in Hosea 7.4, we know that it is in full view by the Lord and that it grieves him greatly. There's no glib view.

Secondly, that they or we agree with the scriptures and its indictment on our sin with no half-baked notions, that it is truly egregious to the Lord so that when we're asking forgiveness, not saying, for example, I'm sorry if you found my words offensive.

[35:24] There's no condition on it. But rather, that it is sorry for the hurt that has been caused. I'm sorry that my words were harsh and I was not gentle with you.

I failed to listen or be open to reason. Thirdly, when confessing, they, we give specifics. And the more grievous, oven-like, the sin, the more important the specifics are when repenting.

Paul exemplifies that in Acts 26. There's no glossing, there's no minimizing, there's no blame-shifting or defending. There's constant reference to the infractions.

And the specificity helps demonstrate that they, we, understand the gravity of what they and we have done. Constantly referring to and understanding the nature of the infractions and the implications.

Fourthly, a recognition that it is God's grace that is allowing them to turn from sin. No dove-like, if you like, a bird brain, kind of, I'll try harder, I'll do better, I'll start over, leaning on our own strength, you know, that way and then this way, trusting in this or then that, but in the Lord alone.

[36:41] We may have tried this way or that way many times and failed, but here, as genuine confession is coming forth, that's casting ourselves on the Lord and on His grace. We, they, confess utter dependence on the grace and mercy of God, moving away from a simple self-reliance to a focus on their relationship with the Lord and dependence on Him and as that vertical is being restored, then there's hope that the horizontal is also restored.

Fifthly, we, they, have a strong desire to dismantle the old sinful self, the oven, the half, you know, and half-peck notions, the bread, the bird brain logic, the faulty bow approaches, the inflamed, the arrogant, the senseless, the deceptive, the insolent, and all of the things that were associated with them.

Dismantling those attitudes, taking on the new. See, repentance, it's not a one and done event.

There's a persisting and pursuing holiness.

There's a continual confession of sin when failing. There's the forsaking of those natural desires to replace them with sort of taking off the old and putting on the new behaviors on life.

And then sixthly, crucially, Darby points out that we, that they recognize the harm that has been caused. It's not about the consequences or the embarrassment to us or to them, but rather a profound understanding and deep regret over the harm perpetrated on another that will be at the forefront of our, of their minds.

[38 : 25] Seeing how their sin has impacted us and others and seeking to make amends over those affected and seeking to bring aid, healing in those relationships that have been damaged.

When we, they do that, then we, they are beginning to truly understand that we or they cannot demand or expect to receive back into relationship in the most serious of circumstances.

We know that in order to rebuild trust, we or they need to do the work of restoration, to work harder to that because we, they realize the concern is shifting away from ourselves or themselves and more onto those whom they have harmed.

And in the worst of circumstances, Darby says that even if that means that we or they recognize the relationship has been harmed beyond repair, that the truly repentant want the best for the other person because they realize what they have done.

These are the essence of true repentance that leads us into deep, deep, wonderful, beautiful, powerful gospel realities when as we come before the Lord, as we come in true repentance, the condemnation that's been hanging over us suddenly is replaced by this flood of forgiveness, a new life, a new start, a new ability to start a relationship afresh with him and with others.

[40 : 04] As we experience the power of the cross, as the greater Adam comes into our reality to redeem us and lead us in the way that we should go. Let's hear him speak in Matthew chapter 9 as he quotes Hosea.

Matthew 9 verse 12, Jesus said, is it not the healthy who need a doctor, it is not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick, but go and learn what this means.

I desire mercy, not sacrifice, for I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. He has made a way. Those willing to set presumption aside can come, that through him and the true repentance and faith that he offers, that the scriptures exemplify for us, receive him as Savior and Lord, then he can begin to heal us as the forgiveness flows, as the power flows, as the new life comes.

Heal us. He can bind up our wounds and restore us, which was the desire at the beginning of chapter 6. He can truly, again as that desire is there, to lead us into a knowledge of and love of God, releasing us from the charges that still remain against us into the life and liberty that he has for us.

Knowing that then as he, we receive his love and our loves are enlarged, that our love for the Lord will not disappear like the mist, but remain forever, because he has established it and he is at work in us and we are trusting him, not in ourselves, not in our own scheming, but in him and him alone, who through his great sacrifice on the cross for our sin, in all its horror, we find mercy, turning unfaithful covenant breakers into faithful new covenant keepers and enjoyers, taking our old nature with its burning oven desires and half-baked arrogance and bird-brained senselessness and faulty bow insolence to give us a new nature in which we enjoy glorious gospel truths that we have been ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, so that we may sing truly the praises of our faithful redeeming, all-knowing, all-seeing

[42 : 38] God who in his power and in his knowledge and in his understanding and in his wisdom chooses and is able to because of the cross cast our sins as far as the east is from the west and remember them no more.

That is the God of the Bible. That is the one whom scripture declares from beginning to end. That is the God that we worship. That is the God that we trust and that is the God that we follow and that is the God to whom we proclaim.

Hallelujah! What a Savior! Amen? Amen. Well let's sing together. Praise my soul, the King of heaven. Let's rejoice in.

Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven. Who like thee our praise should sing? And maybe this morning if you're thinking I'm not trusting Christ yet, then maybe use the words of this song to trust in him as Savior and Lord this morning.