

# Hitting the Mark # 1

## What Is Repentance?

Repentance is, first of all, a turning away from all sin. And, so far as this first aspect is concerned, it closely resembles reformation.

But repentance further involves turning to God, in believing prayer, for forgiveness and cleansing from all sin. Such prayer is not necessarily vocal, but it usually is. The repentant person confesses to God that he is a sinner and asks for forgiveness. If he obeys the gospel, he can rest assured that God will forgive, for His Word promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9).

## The Mode of Baptism

According to the Scriptures, the proper mode of baptism is immersion. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16). "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:38). "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Romans 6:4). A corpse is not buried by placing it on top of the ground and sprinkling a little soil on it, but by covering it completely.

## The Formula for Baptism

Jesus commanded His disciples to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). He did not command them to use these words as a formula, but He commanded them to baptize in "the name." The word name is used here in the singular, and it is the focal point of the baptismal command. The titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost describe God's relationships to humanity and are not the supreme, saving name described here, which is Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Jesus is the name in which the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed. The angel of the Lord instructed Joseph, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name," and, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,...the Father will send in my name" (John 5:43; 14:26). Thus by baptizing in the name of Jesus, we honor the Godhead. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

## The Gift of the Holy Ghost

There are two major evidences of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The initial, outward evidence is speaking with tongues, which means speaking miraculously in languages the speaker does not know.

On the birthday of the New Testament church, the Day of Pentecost after Christ's ascension, approximately 120 disciples of Christ were inundated by the Spirit of God and "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).

Further evidence of the Spirit's abiding presence in our lives is the fruit of the Spirit, which Paul mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

# Hitting the Mark # 2

## Understanding Soul Winning!

In order for us to win a soul we need three things, number one we need a sinner who is lost. Number two we need someone willing to compel them to repent and be baptized in Jesus name and third, we need God to fill them with the Holy Ghost and this is the increase! Once this happens according to Acts 2:38 and John 3:5 the person has been born again!

One example given was to hand out a church card or invite someone to church. If we go out and hand out a church card or invite someone this is a form of planting seed and we must plant seed; however the person did not take part in the new birth experience so they are still lost and we have not won a soul.

Another time we may go out and hand out a flyer, we ask the person to come back to our church and repent and be baptized in Jesus name, they agree. Once back at the church we repent, baptized them in Jesus name and then lay hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost. They do not receive it right then, so we watered. We must pray for people to receive the Holy Ghost but we cannot give it to them, this is Gods job to give the increase. Now if they do not receive the Holy Ghost then they have not been born again or have taken part in the new birth!

Acts 1:8 says: *But ye shall **receive power**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: **and ye shall be witnesses***

This tells us that the Holy Ghost will give us the power to become witnesses! Every person who has received it will get this power and be able to witness! The sad part of the story is in another verse of scripture found in **2 Timothy 3:5** says there will be a group of people on the earth who have a form of godliness, that's right they don't smoke, curse, chew tobacco, they dress right, live right and have godliness but they deny the power! Power to what? Acts 1:8 says the power was to become a witness!

*Having a form of godliness, **but denying the power thereof**: from such turn away.*

Some say they cannot talk to strangers because they are scared or fear what might happen. This is the most common excuse we have found when asking people why they won't witness to others. Although it is a real excuse we must ask ourselves where we received the spirit of fear. The Bible says God has not given us a spirit of fear!

The spirit of fear comes from the Devil. He binds us with fear so we will not witness, he shackles us with fear so we cannot pull others from the lake of fire. We must understand that fear is a spirit and we must be delivered from that spirit. The spirit of fear is no different from being addicted to tobacco or drugs, it binds us from doing the will of God and we cannot just use it as an excuse but we must be delivered from it!

Let's all work harder at winning the lost!

# Hitting the Mark # 3

In the Bible the Hebrews writer tells us plainly about **church attendance**.

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

The “assembling of ourselves together” in Hebrews 10:25 is clearly a reference to the New Testament church of which every believer is to be a faithful member. This is the example that is given throughout the book of Acts, beginning with Acts 2:41-42. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15) and has been commissioned to fulfill the Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). The Commission was given to the apostles, who were the representatives of the churches.

Such a great and glorious work requires faithful workers, and those who neglect the church are neglecting their spiritual duty. No human institution can be successful apart from committed and faithful members. This is true for a business, a football team, or a government agency. And it is equally true for the church. “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2). “As spiritual declension sets in, one of the first things to fade is faithfulness to the assembly of the local church. Observe that even then, wavering Christians were sporadic in attendance to their local churches” (David Sorenson).

## **Why the believer needs to be faithful to the church:**

1. FAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO REMAIN STRONG IN THE FAITH (Hebrews 10:23).
2. FAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH IS NECESSARY FOR FELLOWSHIP (Hebrews 10:24-25)
3. FAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH IS A RESPONSIBILITY (Hebrews 10:25)
4. FAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH IS NECESSARY FOR INSTRUCTION (“exhorting one another,” Hebrews 10:25)
5. FAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH IS NECESSARY FOR SPIRITUAL SAFETY (“and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,” Hebrews 10:25b)
6. WE NEED TO BE REMINDED OF CHRIST’S COMING (“as ye see the day approaching,” Hebrews 10:25b)
7. FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHURCH IS AN EVIDENCE OF SALVATION (Hebrews 10:26-29)

# Hitting the Mark # 4

## Aggressive Worship....

If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled service before, you will discover that Biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. Join in with us as we praise God together in spirit and in truth.

## Biblical Expressions of Worship

- **We pray together aloud** because in the Bible we read, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24).
- **We lift our hands in praise** because in the Bible we read, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord" (Psalm 134:2).
- **We sing with all our hearts** because in the Bible we read, "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise" (Psalm 98:4).
- **We play musical instruments** because in the Bible we read, "And all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments" (2 Samuel 6:5).
- **We clap and shout** unto God because in the Bible we read, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph" (Psalm 47:1).
- **We dance before the LORD** because in the Bible we read, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs" (Psalm 150:4).
- **We testify publicly** because in the Bible we read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" (Psalm 22:22).
- **We anoint with oil for divine healing** because in the Bible we read, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).
- **We allow the operation of the spiritual gifts** because in the Bible we read, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

# Hitting the Mark # 5

## Personal Devotions

The reason devotions are so important is quite simple — you receive faith by reading the word (So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Rom 10:17) and through praying in the Spirit (But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit. Jude 20).

This faith is what gives you victory over the world and your flesh (This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1Joh 5:4) and gives you power to overcome every temptation from the wicked one (Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Eph 6:16).

I suggest starting your day with a minimum of 15 minuets in prayer and 15 minuets in reading the New Testament. You should rise early enough so interruptions from other family members and phone calls don't break up your time with the Lord.

From there you should slowly increase your time with the Lord each month until you are spending 1 hour in prayer and 1 hour in reading or studying the Bible. This time investment will pay unbelievable rewards in greater victory over the flesh and self, more grace, an increase in the fruit of the Spirit, and in a deeper and more fulfilling devotion to God.

I would also suggest you get an mp3 player and listen to the New Testament instead of the news, talk shows, and easy listening music while you are driving, walking or even working (if permitted).

If you need more power in your life, if you are struggling to gain victory in an area in your experience, if you are feeling a strong drawing from the world, if you are not moving forward and gaining new ground then you need more faith. It is faith that gives you the victory over the flesh and the world and it is faith that will quench all the darts of the evil one. You will get this faith by reading the Word and praying in the Spirit.

# Hitting the Mark # 6

## Fasting and Fervent Prayer

Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Lord can transform your life.

The awesome power can be released through you as you fast through the enabling of the Holy Spirit. ... some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, "when you fast," not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life-and make you a channel of revival to others.
- Fasting and prayer are the only disciplines that fulfill the requirements of II Chronicles 7:14:  
*"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

## The Bible Recounts Primarily Two Types of Fasts

A partial fast is described in the book of Daniel. Although the water fast seemed to be the custom of the prophet, there was a three-week period in which he only abstained from "delicacies," meat, and wine (Daniel 10:3).

The two primary types mentioned in the Bible are the "absolute" and "supernatural absolute" fasts. These are total fasts-no food (solid or liquid) and no water. Paul went on an absolute fast for three days following his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:9). Moses and Elijah engaged in what must be considered a supernatural absolute fast of forty days (Deuteronomy 9:9; I Kings 19:8).

Receiving God's best blessing from a fast requires solid commitment. Arranging special time each day with God is absolutely crucial in attaining intimate communion with the Lord. You must devote yourself to seeking God's face, even (and especially) during those times in which you feel weak, vulnerable, or irritable. Read His Word and pray during what were mealtimes. Meditate on Him when you awake in the night. Sing praises to Him whenever you please. God will enable you to experience His command to "pray without ceasing" as you seek His presence.

Be aware that Satan will do everything he can to pull you away from your prayer and Bible reading time. When you feel the enemy trying to discourage you, immediately go to God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your resolve in the face of difficulties and temptations.

The enemy makes you a target because he knows that fasting is the most powerful of all Christian disciplines and that God may have something very special to show you as you wait upon Him and seek His face. Satan does not want you to grow in your faith, and will do anything from making you hungry and grumpy to bringing up trouble in your family or at work to stop you. Make prayer your shield against such attacks.

# Hitting the Mark # 7 & 8

Physical/Mental Struggles – Vices (habits) & Addictions

## ADDICTION

### I. Direct Scripture references pertaining to "addiction."

#### A. Christian leaders

I Tim. 3:3 - ""not addicted to wine"

I Tim. 3:8 - "not addicted to much wine"

Titus 1:7 - "not addicted to wine"

#### B. Older women

Titus 2:3 - "not enslaved to much wine"

### II. Considering the meaning of the word "addiction."

A. Webster's Dict. - "to surrender oneself to something obsessively or habitually."

B. Gerald May - Addiction and Grace

1. Def. - "compulsive, habitual behavior that limits freedom of human desire"

2. Attraction additions and aversion additions (indulgence and denial)

C. Characteristics: "must have," "want more," "no problem," "can't stop."

D. Same patterns of behavior also identified as weaknesses, vulnerabilities, character faults, neuroses, "flesh," besetting sins, life-dominating sins, strongholds of sins, demons, idolatry, etc.

E. Differing personalities and tendencies to obsess:

S - Success, significance, freedom, leader, competition, excitement

E - Approval, social, popularity, talk, relationship, love

L - Security, attachment, tradition, belonging, status quo

F - Knowledge, accuracy, structure, organization, perfection

### III. Dealing with addictive patterns

Phil. 4:19 - "God shall supply all your needs...in Christ Jesus"

Prov. 13:25 - "the righteous has enough to satisfy his appetite"

John 8:32,36 - "the truth shall set you free"

Gal. 5:1 - "It was for freedom that Christ set us free"

II Cor. 3:5 - "not adequate in ourselves...adequacy is from God"

II Chron. 20:15 - "battle is not yours, but God's"

Exod. 23:29-33 - "I will not drive them out in a single year"

We all have habits, both good and bad. Anything you do automatically without consciously thinking about it, or without specifically deciding to do it, is a habit. Good habits or practices--such as tidiness, courtesy, good manners etc. are a real blessing. But when the habits you've picked up are BAD or DESTRUCTIVE, and you find them hard or almost impossible to change, they are known as VICES.

Some vices may include: ALCOHOLISM, DRUGS, GAMBLING, HOMOSEXUALITY, GLUTTONY, or COMPULSIVE EATING, HATRED and BITTERNESS, FEAR and WORRY, JEALOUSY, LYING or of practicing DECEPTION (just to name a few).

Remember, God's Word says: "ONE can chase a THOUSAND, but TWO can put TEN THOUSAND to flight" (Deuteronomy 32:30), and it helps greatly to have someone else pray with you when you feel oppressed or distressed or attacked by the Enemy. "Where TWO or THREE are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." And, "If any TWO of you shall AGREE on Earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven."--Matthew 18:19-20.

# Hitting the Mark # 9

## **Tithes & Offerings**

### "The Difference"

Tithes - The tithe is the tenth of all the increase that God gives to you. What does "increase" include? "Increase" is everything that increases the value of earthly possessions that God places into your trust, whether it be earned income or unearned gifts. A tenth of everything that is "increase" to you belongs to God in the form of tithes. The tithe of your increase is not yours to give to God; it is God's for you to give to God, and it is a privilege for us to have it to give to Him.

Offerings - Offerings are gifts brought to God beyond the tithes. The tithe was always ten percent of one's increase, but with certain offerings, God gave His people some discretion as to the amount or number of offerings to bring. Their financial situation in life and the depth of their zeal for God was shown by their choices concerning offerings.

## **Don't Tip God**

Do not be foolish. If you will not bring God all His tithes and offerings, please don't insult Him by "donating" a few bucks to His work. Jesus doesn't need your charity or your pity, and He has not commanded that his faithful servants must live on tips.

## **Bible verses about tithes**

Here is a list of bible verses from the Old and New Testament that are about tithing.

Genesis 14:20 – Melchizedek comes out to meet Abraham, as Abraham gives him a tithe of the spoils of his victory.

Genesis 28:20-22 – After the vision of God's renewed covenant, Jacob initiates a covenant with God vowing to give him a tithe of what he receives from the promised land.

Leviticus 27:30-32 – The specifications of the tithe is introduced into the law of Moses.

Numbers 18:21 – The tithe is dedicated the Levites for the work in the tabernacle.

Deuteronomy 12:5-11 – God gives instructions for what to do with the tithe once Israel crosses the Jordan.

Deuteronomy 14:22-29 – God gives instructions on how to disperse and exchange the tithe.

Deuteronomy 26:12-15 – God gives instructions on how Israel should sanctify the tithe before they can ask for a blessing.

2 Chronicles 31:5-12 – The children of Israel do what's right under the reign of Hezekiah, and bring the tithes to the designated places.

Nehemiah 10:37-38 – Israel obeys God and brings the tithes to the storehouse.

Nehemiah 12:44 – Officers were appointed to watch over the tithes in the storehouse.

Nehemiah 13:5-12 – Nehemiah cleanses the storehouse and kicks Tobiah out of the room that was designated to store the tithe. He then restores order.

Amos 4:4 – God commands Israel to bring back the tithe and reiterates the curse that is upon them if they don't.

Malachi 3:8-10 – God reprimands Israel for not delivering the tithe, and reiterates the blessings and curse that would be in result of whatever decision they chose.

Matthew 23:23 – Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for not obeying the weightier matters of the law along with tithing.

Luke 11:42 – A parallel passage of Matthew 23:23 as Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for not obeying the weightier matters of the law along with tithing.

Luke 18:12 – A Pharisee brags about his obedience to the law and tithing.

Hebrews 7:5-9 – Abraham's tithe is used to illustrate a change concerning the priesthood.

# Hitting the Mark # 10

## Commitment to church - activity/involvement

- Willing to commit time, treasure, and talent to build the kingdom of God.

Everything we own, everything we have comes from God. So when we give, we simply offer him a very small portion of all the abundance he has already given to us. Giving is an expression of our thankfulness and praise to God! It comes from a heart of worship. For everything we give already belongs to him!

*1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

*2 Corinthians 9:6 ¶But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

- **Time for God**

*Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

*Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

*James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

- **Treasure for God**

*1 Corinthians 16:1 ¶Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.*

*2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

*Proverbs 11:24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.*

- **Talent for God**

*Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

*2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

*1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

# Outward Holiness & Separation from the world

## A. Modesty

The word modesty isn't mentioned in The Bible, Scripture uses the words "pure", "chaste" and "nakedness" to refer to modesty of body and of heart. For example...

*1 Timothy 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

*Titus 2:3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;*

*4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*

*5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*

*6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.*

*Isaiah 47:3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.*

Yes, personal modesty and decency are so important to God, that He states right there in scripture that He will make the Israelites naked before their enemies as a punishment. If God would use immodesty as a punishment, how can we ever justify our own 'nakedness' by wearing clothing that barely covers our skin?

## B. Hair – Clothing

*1 Corinthians 11:13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?*

*14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 15 But if a woman have long hair; it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.*

The Corinthian church was in the middle of a controversy about the roles of men and women and the proper order of authority within the church. In the Corinthian society, women showed submission to their husbands (or men of authority) by wearing a veil. It seems that some of the women in the church were discarding their veils, something that only pagan temple prostitutes or other rebellious women would do. For a woman to come to church without her veil would be dishonoring to her husband, as well as culturally confusing. By the same token, for a man to wear a veil or to somehow have his head covered during worship was not culturally acceptable.

Paul appeals to biology to illustrate the appropriateness of following the cultural standards: women naturally have longer hair than men, and men are much more prone to baldness. That is, God created women with a “natural veil” and men with an “uncovered head.” If a woman spurns the mark of her submission (the veil), she may as well shave her head (verse 6). His point is that if the culture says a woman should not be bald (going without her natural covering), then why would she reject that same culture’s standard of wearing a veil (going without her cultural covering)?

For the man’s part, it is unnatural for him to have “long hair” (verse 14). His hair is naturally shorter (and thinner) than the woman’s. This corresponds to the Corinthian tradition of men not wearing a head covering during worship. Paul urges the church to conform to the generally held ideas of male and female appearance.

## C. Outward Adornment

*1 Timothy 2:9 ¶In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.*