

## Repent and Believe

“The time has come. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.” MK 1:15

Repent has been misinterpreted as confession of wrong doings. In the western world, people often use confessions to ease their guilt feelings. But in the eastern world, Chinese in particular, people concern more about shame. When we do something wrong, we worry more about the effect over our family than our inner peace. Confession does not help to save face for the family. This Chinese mindset makes me to take a closer look at the Bible.

Paul said that sin is not his wrong doing but the power that caused him to do wrong. “Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.” (Rom 7:20) Repent means to get rid of that power deeply rooted in him. Since we don't have the ability to rid that power, we have to depend on outside help – our Savior.

As soon as a baby is pushed out of the mother's womb and the umbilical cord is cut, s/ he is disconnected with the mother. The baby will cry until s/ he is reunited with his mother by her caress and milk. Many growing up without a caring mother will develop hateful worldviews.

It is just like that in our relationship with God since Adam and Eve. As soon as we are separated from God, the evil power comes in and make us rebel against God. Paul realized that was sin, the power rooted in him, made him do things he did not want to do.

Jesus told us to repent and believe. We must **A**cept Jesus as our Savior from sin. **B**elieve that we are reconnected with God again in the Kingdom and that God will nourish us and protect us. **C**hange our mindsets and behavior as we submit to Jesus as our Lord.

Let us pray: *Gracious God: we accept Jesus as our Savior and we believe that Christ can give us abundant life. Change our ways of thinking, behavior and habits as we submit to Jesus as our Lord. Encourage us to be proud citizens of the Kingdom and faithful members of the church. Amen.*

## 悔改與信奉

“日期滿了，神的國近了。你們當悔改，信福音。” (可 1:15)

“悔改” 往往被誤解為“告解”，向神懺悔已做的錯事，以減輕心中的犯罪感，這做法是源於西方的傳統。中國人以家庭為重，犯了錯，不能公開承認，以免羞辱家人。因此我們要深入細看聖經的教訓。

保羅說：“立志為善由得我，只是行出來由不得我 ... 若我去作所不願意作的，就不是我作的，乃是住在我裏頭的罪作的”。(羅 7：18-20) 是“罪”使我們犯錯。悔改是除根，是徹底除去罪。做錯了事我們可以自己改過，但在我們心中的罪，不能自己解決，必須靠神的拯救。

當嬰孩初出母腹，臍帶被切斷，便開始與母親分體了，那真是不好過。那嬰兒要掙扎求生，在驚恐中大哭。要等到母親給他慈祥的擁抱和溫馨的哺乳，嬰孩才能安靜下來。亞當、夏娃離開樂園，與神分開時，罪就在人的心中扎根了，只有靠耶穌才能得到釋放。

耶穌說：你們當悔改及信。要悔改就必需倚賴耶穌的拯救。信有“相信”和“信奉”的意思。相信神的同在，可使人得著豐盛的生命。信奉是尊基督為主，求主改變自己的心懷意念去事奉祂。能如此行，我們就得到天國的福音了。

請禱告：施恩的上帝，我願接受耶穌的救恩，尊祂為主，相信基督能使我得著更豐盛的生命，求祢改變我的思想、行為及習慣，塑造我成為天國良好的公民及教會忠心的教友。阿們。