

RETURNING TO GODLY STANDARDS

Key Verse:

Ephesians 5:8

⁸ for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

1. Confess Sinful Ways

A. Recognize Past and Present Failures
Nehemiah 9:1-3, 26

¹ Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth and with dirt upon them. ² The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. ³ While they stood in their place, they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for *another* fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

Nehemiah 9:26 ²⁶ "But they became disobedient and rebelled against You, And cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets who had admonished them So that

they might return to You, And they committed great blasphemies¹

B. Acknowledge Sin's Consequences
Nehemiah 9:27-31, 36, 38

²⁷ "Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, But when they cried to You in the time of their distress, You heard from heaven, and according to Your great compassion You gave them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors. ²⁸ "But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before You; Therefore You abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. When they cried again to You, You heard from heaven, And many times You rescued them according to Your compassion, ²⁹ And admonished them in order to turn them back to Your law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against Your ordinances, By which if a man observes

them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.

³⁰ "However, You bore with them for many years, And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets, Yet they would not give ear. Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.

³¹ "Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them, For You are a gracious and compassionate God. ³² "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness, Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You, Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers and on all Your people, From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day. ³³ "However, You are just in all that has come upon us; For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly. ³⁴ "For our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers have not kept Your law Or paid

attention to Your commandments and Your admonitions with which You have admonished them. ³⁵ "But they, in their own kingdom, With Your great goodness which You gave them, With the broad and rich land which You set before them, Did not serve You or turn from their evil deeds. ³⁶ "Behold, we are slaves today, And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty, Behold, we are slaves in it. ³⁷ "Its abundant produce is for the kings Whom You have set over us because of our sins; They also rule over our bodies And over our cattle as they please, So we are in great distress. ³⁸ "Now because of all this We are making an agreement in writing; And on the sealed document *are the names of* our leaders, our Levites *and* our priests."

2. Reject Sinful Practices

A. Turn from Sin
Nehemiah 10:28-31

28 Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and all those who had separated themselves

from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding, **29** are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of GOD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes; **30** and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons. **31** As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego *the crops* the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

B. Improper for God's People: Ephesians 5:3-7

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints ; ⁴ and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance

in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them;

3. Embrace Godly Standards

**A. Take Responsibility
Nehemiah 10:32-39**

³² We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: ³³ for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God. ³⁴ Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites and the people so that they might bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at fixed times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God,

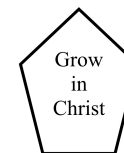
as it is written in the law; ³⁵ and that they might bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the LORD annually, ³⁶ and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God. ³⁷ We will also bring the first of our dough , our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithes of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns. ³⁸ The priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse. ³⁹ For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers. Thus we will not neglect the house of our God.

**B. Live as Children of Light
Ephesians 5:8-10**

⁸ for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰ trying

to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

**GROW DAILY
Returning to Godly
Standards**



MONDAY:

Consequences of Disobedience
2 Kings 17:7-14

TUESDAY:

Confession Calls for Action
Ezra 10:1-12

WEDNESDAY:

Godly Lifestyle Rewarded
Psalm 15:1-5

THURSDAY:

A New Way of Living
Ephesians 4:23-32

FRIDAY:

Walk Worthy of the Lord
Colossians 1:9-14

SATURDAY:

Confession Needed for Forgiveness

1 John 1:5 – 2:2

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April 1, 2012

MONDAY:

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Disobedience
2 Kings 17:7-14

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. ¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward. ¹² Who can discern *his* errors? Acquit me of hidden *faults*. ¹³ Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous *sins*; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression. ¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and

the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your
sight,
O LORD, my rock and my
Redeemer.

TUESDAY:

Confession Calls for Action
Ezra 10:1-12

1 Now while Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very large assembly, men, women and children, gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept bitterly. **2** Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, said to Ezra, "We have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. **3** So now let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. **4** Arise! For *this* matter is your responsibility, but we will be with you; be courageous and act." **5** Then Ezra rose and made the leading priests, the Levites and all Israel, take oath that they would do according to

this [e]proposal; so they took the oath. **6** Then Ezra rose from before the house of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib. Although he went there, he did not eat bread nor drink water, for he was mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles. **7** They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the exiles, that they should assemble at Jerusalem, **8** and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the leaders and the elders, all his possessions should be forfeited and he himself excluded from the assembly of the exiles. **9** So all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month on the twentieth of the month, and all the people sat in the open square *before* the house of God, **(L)**trembling because of this matter and the heavy rain. **10** Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful and have married foreign wives adding to the guilt of Israel. **11** Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers and **(N)**do His will; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." **12**

Then all the assembly replied with a loud voice, "That's right! As you have said, so it is our duty to do.

WEDNESDAY:

Godly Lifestyle Rewarded
Psalm 15:1-5

¹ My son, if you will receive my words
And treasure my
commandments within you,
² Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; ³ For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; ⁴ If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; ⁵ Then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God.

THURSDAY:

A New Way of Living
Ephesians 4:23-32

23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. **25** Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE *of you* WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. **26** BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **27** and do not give the devil an opportunity. **28** He who steals must steal no longer;

but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have *something* to share with [d]one who has need. **29** Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear. **30** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

FRIDAY:

Walk Worthy of the Lord
Colossians 1:9-14

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of *it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance

of the saints in Light. **13** For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

SATURDAY:

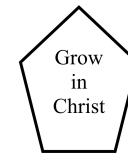
Confession Needed for
Forgiveness
1 John 1:5 – 2:2

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; **7** but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

2:1-2 My little children, I am (writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the

Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; **2** and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world*.

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Grow Intentionally



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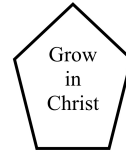
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confession has in their
relationship with God.**

**2. Determine to turn away
from any practices that
separate them from fellowship
with God.**

**3. Embrace Godly behavioral
standards necessary to
preserve that fellowship.**

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