



Sunday – October 22, 2023

The Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills church of Christ

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805
(863) 688-4336

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Study
9:50 AM Worship
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study

Visit our Website:

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

For Sermon & Class outlines,
Bible Study Materials and
Other Information.

Visit our Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/LakelandHillschurchofchrist for events,
information, and links to our
YouTube Archives

Visit us on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCu7AG_3jUtpBDlr2NPqB3iw for
Live Streams and Video
Archives.

Elders

Bob Marschall
Leon Miller
Larry Wisdom

Deacons

Bucky Day
Sherman Johnson
Michael Sadler
David Williams

Evangelist

Chuck Kozens

"ONCE YOU ADMIT IT, WILL YOU STOP IT?"

Jarrold M. Jacobs

There was a cartoon several years ago in the Saturday Review of Literature in which little George Washington was standing with an ax in his hand. Before him lay the famous cherry tree. He had already made his admission that he had cut the tree down. (*After all, he "cannot tell a lie," According to Mason Weems.*) The cartoon, however, focused on George's father, who looked upon the scene in exasperation. His words were in the caption. *"All right, so you admit it! You always admit it! The question is, when are you going to stop doing it?"*

The story above is amusing, but it makes a good point that deserves our attention. Once we come to the point that we admit that we have committed a specific sin or sins, will we stop? Perhaps you know of those who readily admit that they are a sinner and in need of salvation. At the same time, these people will not take that next step, which is to turn from those sins and live right by obeying the Gospel (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). How many people do we know who will admit they have sinned and acknowledge it is wrong, against God's will, and they are in error? Many will be quick to say they have sinned before God but refuse to do anything about their sin? They have admitted their sin, but they have not stopped their sin.

It has been said that one of the most difficult aspects of any problem is admitting that you have one. It seems like some people have "*conquered*" the issue of admitting their problem but will do nothing beyond that. How can continuing in sin be beneficial to anyone? A friend of mine said when it gets to this point, the person is no longer confessing sin in his life but bragging! I agree.

In the Bible, we learn that God not only demands that men admit they are sinners in His sight but also demands that men do something about that sin! In Old Testament days, Solomon said, *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"* (Prov. 28:13). Notice please that God expected the man to confess and forsake the sin in order to have mercy. It is not enough to merely confess (*admit?*) the sin and then go on living in it! In New Testament days, Christ said, *"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"* (Lk. 13:3). What does "*repentance*" mean? It means turning from the way you used to live and living according to Christ's will! An example of repentance is found in the book of Matthew. Christ spoke a parable concerning two sons who were told by their father to work in the vineyard. One said he would go but did not. The other refused but later "*repented and went*" (Matt. 21:29). This son not only had to admit that he was wrong for disobeying his father but also had to do what was right! Read Luke 15:11-21 and see another son who was in the same position. When the prodigal son came to his senses, he was ready to repent and return to his father (Lk. 15:18-19). In repentance, we see one not only recognizing the guilt of his sin and confessing sin but also stopping the sinful behavior!

When the apostle Paul wrote the second epistle to the Corinthians, he told them that he knew what he wrote in the first letter would make them sorry, but he rejoiced because that godly sorrow led them to repentance (2 Cor. 7:9-10). Notice that when we sorrow over an act that we know is wrong, we still have not done what is right! That sorrow leads us to repentance, but we must still repent!

When one learns that he has sinned in the sight of God, he must not only admit that he is in sin not only be sorry about the sin but also turn from sin and do what is right! Only then can one be in a right relationship with God. This is the very nature of repentance.

Dear friend, examine your life. Are there things you are doing which contradict the will of God? In what areas of your life are you guilty of sin? In those cases, not only must you face up to the fact that you are guilty but also take the necessary steps to get out of that sin. If you're outside of Christ, then waste no time repenting of your sins, confessing Christ as the Son of God, and being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38, 8:36-38; Mk. 16:16). If you've done those things already, but have been caught up in various sins, then turn from your error in repentance, confess those things and pray for God's forgiveness (Acts 8:22; I Jn. 1:9). It is not enough to admit you have a problem. You must cease that sin and do what is right, just as God told the Jews in the long ago (Isa. 1:16-17)! God is longsuffering. Therefore, let us repent and live for Him (2 Pet. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:14-15). Admit you have sinned and stop it while you still can! Be right in the sight of God and be saved today (2 Cor. 6:2; Mk. 16:16)!