



"I AM where two or three are gathered in My Name."

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In Abide #1 we discussed a non-optional relational core demand of our Father that's cited throughout His Word—**child-like trust in Him**. Our Lord Jesus anchors this requirement of trust when He tells you, *"Truly, I say to you, if you have trust and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen"* (Matthew 21:21). The life of "God's friend", the patriarch Abraham (James 2:23), reflected this child-like trust – an obedient trust that's free of doubt. Child-like trust is crucial for the *genuinely* born again. And Abraham may be your Father's litmus test to evaluate your own child-like obedient trust. **Don't just be a "believer" like the demons** (James 2:19).

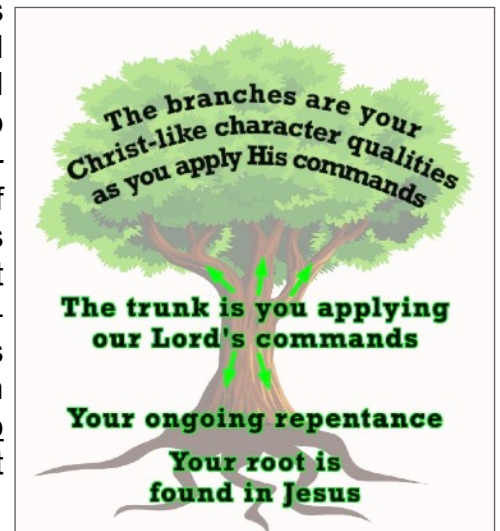
FYI: If you look up the various meanings of "believe" in a Bible dictionary, you find that they completely lack the child-like trust to which our heavenly Father has every right. They confine the definitions of "believe" to "have a mental persuasion" or "be of an opinion" when the biblical context clearly reveals that child-like obedient trust is being called for. If you're *genuinely* born again, make sure your trust in our Father and Lord Jesus far outweighs just "believing".

We've often emphasized **emunah**, the Hebrew word for the depth of trust our Father commands His children. The Hebrew root for **emunah** means "to jump off a cliff." It's a trust that emanates as a heartfelt response leading to obedient action. Your trust pointedly demonstrates that you understand your ALMIGHTY Father's sovereignty and His abounding love for you.



In discerning the depth of your own child-like trust in your heavenly Father, ask yourself, **"What do I fear that Father might take away from me or call me to do?"** To the degree in which you have *any fear* of what He might take from you or how He might change your life direction reflects your lack of child-like trust. **Don't live this way!**

In this Abide we'll discuss the second non-optional requirement for the *genuinely* born again: **your ongoing repentance**. Think of ongoing repentance as the base of a flourishing tree. Repentance out of loving and obedient trust attaches you to your Root, our Lord Jesus, and to your heavenly Father. The tree trunk is you continuing to take our Lord at His word, *"If you love Me, keep My commands"* (John 14:15; see also 14:21; 15:10; 1John 5:2,3). Out of grateful love you earnestly pursue putting into practice His relevant commands among the 613 in the Older Testament and 1,050 in the Newer Testament. The tree branches represent the reality that the more you obey our Lord's commands through His Spirit, the more you're aware and humbled when you do sin. You want to be fully clean and available for Him to use as He wills. At the same time you also discover the heart motives and character of our Lord Jesus flourishing in you.



➤ Many *genuinely* born again who've spent time in nominal Christianity realized they'd never heard about adamantly applying our Lord's commands as a way of life and showing love for Him and for others. If this describes you, then be diligent now in putting His commands into practice for every facet of your life! You don't "earn heaven" by doing this. But you do affirm the depth of your love for our Lord Jesus and your regard for His holiness as you represent Him to others.

Please download a list of [*Newer Testament commands*](#). Ask the Spirit of our Lord for the grace and power to put these commands into practice as each situation arises. You'll find yourself being transformed by Him in ways that just attending a Bible Study could never accomplish. Up until you read this article you may have been ignorant of your responsibility to our Lord to follow His commands. But now *if* you go on without applying them to yourself, you'll become a **persistent sinner**. **Don't be this way!**

Confess means you recognize and agree with the Spirit that you've sinned.
Repent means you replace your sinful attitude or action with that which conforms to obeying our gracious Lord's commands and growing in His character.

We told you in Abide #1 that it's the **purpose of heart** of the *genuinely* born again that clearly distinguishes them from Christians in name only –“nominal Christians” who practice religion but really live for their own desires and goals. Out of your grateful love for your Lord Jesus, your purpose of heart is demonstrated in both your **child-like obedient trust** and your **heartfelt repentance**. **Repentance** ➔ helped you become *genuinely* born again. ➔ **Ongoing repentance** reveals that you're continuing on the path to your salvation. ➔ **Ongoing repentance** is also an absolute necessity for fellowshiping in homes as extended spiritual family.

Ongoing repentance is THE precursor to fellowship with our heavenly Father and Lord Jesus, and is essential for authentic fellowship with each other.

The biblical process of repentance begins when you **confess your sin**. Inner guilt pierces you when you recognize that you violated one or more of our Lord's righteous commands. You deeply desire His forgiveness and cleansing because **HE** is the One you offended by your sin. Paul describes this process when he tells us that “*godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret*” (2Corinthians 7:10). This heartfelt motive of godly sorrow describes the *genuinely* born again whenever you sin.

After recognizing that you've violated our Lord's command, **repenting for your sin** is a complete U-turn for you. You turn away from that sin and replace it with our Lord's righteous command for you. It's through ongoing repentance in your life whenever it's needed that you discover the character of our Lord Jesus deepening and flourishing in you. In essence, through your repentance you are yielding to the indwelling Spirit and replacing your sinful motive/attitude/action with the heart motive of our Lord Jesus. Turn to the Spirit for help in this transformation process and “*take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*” (2Corinthians 10:5). (Please see our series: [***Repentance Leads To Christ-like character***](#).)

FYI: Just before we returned to the United States with the Hebraic Foundations, our heavenly Father told us His conditions for using us to make known these essential truths: “*It's because you live repentantly with Me. As long as you remain repentant, I will use you to share this message.*” We're still sharing it!

“For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?” (2Corinthians 6:14).

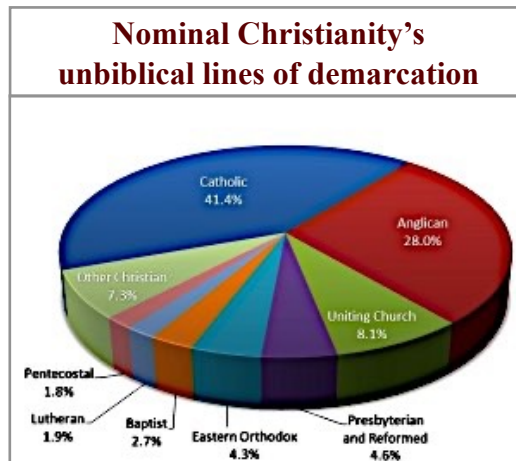
Our heavenly Father has clear criteria for His children both in their relationship with Him and with each other. But over the centuries these biblical benchmarks have been obscured or com-

pletely done away with by Nicolaitan clergy and anti-Semitic theologians. When nominal Christians consider the various divisions (40,000+) in Christianity, they normally think along creedal denominational lines. (See diagram.) But it's absolutely essential that the *genuinely* born again never fragment Christianity this way. There's only one Body! Make sure *you* know and live by our Father's righteous lines of demarcation for His children: our **love and child-like obedient trust** and **ongoing repentance**.

The *genuine* must not be influenced by nominal Christianity where the repentant and the unrepentant "fellowship" together, and where unbelievers—people who don't have the Holy Spirit—are instructed in biblical living the same way believers are. The *genuinely* born again need to recognize our Father's specific lines of demarcation for His kids between light and darkness, between righteousness and lawlessness, between the repentant and unrepentant.

During our years of conducting seminars around the US we found just one pastor, in Enid, OK, who was willing to start their Sunday service by calling for the people to spend time examining their hearts in repentance first. He asked everyone to kneel down. When they were clean of unconfessed sin, they could stand. It was 45 minutes before the last person stood up, but no one felt inconvenienced. Then they began their collective worship as grateful appreciation for Father's grace in their lives. There was a complete change of spiritual atmosphere that everyone could sense!

On another occasion we were visiting a congregation when one of the elders walked forward to stop the service during the first worship song. As he reached the front, he was initially very nervous. Then the Holy Spirit prompted him to look directly at Mike. Instantly Mike knew what the man was about to do and nodded his head to affirm him. The elder then told the congregants that there was too much tolerated sin for our Father to be pleased with their worship. Heads bowed and repentance went on for over 20 minutes before worship in song resumed. **Deeply consider what we're telling you in these anecdotes!**



Father's righteous fellowship criteria apply:

1. When you gather to worship with others.
2. When you pray with others.
3. When you study the Scripture for application with others.
4. When you share the Body and Blood of Jesus with others.

We're relating these anecdotes (and we have many more) as a warning for the *genuinely* born again to restrict your fellowship family to those who are serious about ongoing repentance in their lives. Even if you appreciated the shed

blood of our Lord Jesus for your sins when you became *genuinely* born again, you may lose that appreciation by remaining in "fellowship" with nominal Christians and persistent sinners.



Before you fellowship as extended spiritual family in a manner that would please our Father and Lord Jesus, ask if anyone in your gathering is holding onto unconfessed sin. (It's even better if each person examined themselves before you gather together so that each one is fully available for how the Spirit would use them among you all!) Don't be a coward about making sure that each brother and sister has "clean hands and a pure heart". Honoring our Lord this way is HIS command for those who claim to belong to Him.

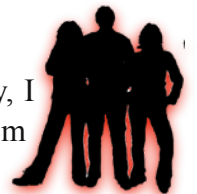
While we were conducting retreats, at times we'd instruct each person to ask the Holy Spirit, **"How many hours in a week am I free of unconfessed sin?"** Four hours a week was the average that the Holy Spirit revealed to them. Think about it. With 168 hours in a week, only four hours were they free of unconfessed sin and fully available for the Spirit to use for Father's purposes. What holy and grateful regard do you think these people had for the precious shed blood of our Lord Jesus on their behalf? Absolutely none!! What holy and grateful regard for fellowship with our Father and Lord Jesus do you think these people had? Absolutely none!! So that became a key time for us to then call each person to repent.

In your walk as someone who is *genuinely* born again, you must be very careful about accepting as brothers and sisters those who say they're "Christian" but the Holy Spirit isn't affirming that they are. Apply our Lord's words about evaluating prophets as divine guidance for you to discern whether someone is truly born of the Spirit: **"Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them"** (Matthew 7:20; see vv.15-20). Lasting spiritual fruit requires: ◆ your child-like obedient trust as you fulfill our Father's purposes to His glory, ◆ you loving our Lord Jesus in His rule of your life as you serve as His redemptive ambassador, ◆ you cooperating with the Holy Spirit as He produces Christ-like character in you, and you experiencing divine encounters and interventions, ◆ your ongoing repentant living out of loving gratitude for Father's grace to you. **This way of life in Christ defines the genuinely born again from the nominal Christian.**

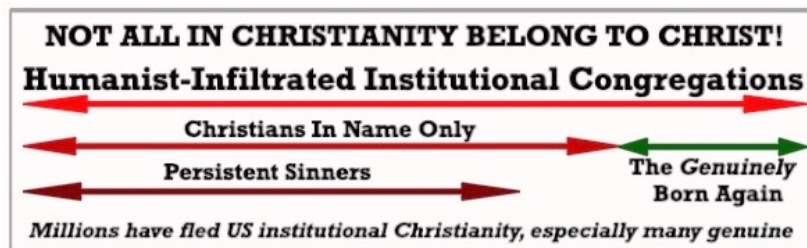
A profusion of people who are "fruitless" fill nominal Christianity. To them, ongoing repentance and the Christ-like character qualities which the Spirit produces in their repentant walk are absolutely meaningless. A big contributing factor for this pathway to perdition is the many false gospels which appeal to the human sin nature by totally discounting repentance. Those who have swallowed these false gospels are delighted to be able to live the way they want just as the world does, and to not have to turn away from their sin. Here are two illustrations we've used in the past to clarify the deceitful heart motives of people who embrace false gospels which don't call for repentance:



•On the morning of their wedding a bride tells her groom, "Honey, I'm a prostitute and I'm going to continue my profession. I refuse to give it up. Will you still marry me?"



•On the morning of his wedding a groom approaches his betrothed and says, "Honey, I love you deeply, but I also have two lovers I don't want to give up. Let me keep them for a while and maybe I can get rid of them later."



People who intend to hold onto their sinful attitudes and actions and values are very comfortable in institutional/nominal Christianity. And because they're not held accountable to live with ongoing repentance, it's easy for them to slide into becoming **reprobate persistent sinners**. Our Lord's appraisal of folks who are happy to attend services and live life *their way* is this: **"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me"** (Matthew 15:8). **If** you allow into your home fellowship family nominal

Christians who have no heartfelt intent to stay repentant and walk according to our Father's will, then Satan will use them to entice you into persistent sinning, and may even destroy your fellowship family (2Timothy 2:26). **Don't let this happen!!**

Don't Allow Your Home Fellowship To Be Just A Humanist "T Group"

T groups began to show up in Christianity around the mid-1960s shortly after repentance in Christianity became relegated to oblivion. T groups were often characterized by group hugs as sensitivity-type therapy to help people feel good about themselves just the way they are. T groups proliferated in Christianity via home groups and house churches which were more like spiritual therapy groups than people who served Father's purposes. And the rise in the Humanist obsession with **instant gratification** and **self-esteem** (AKA self-exaltation) in this nation paved the way for unbiblical **self-fixation** that has overcome much of institutional Christianity as well as the secular world. This has led to several generations of "Christian" parents who have ignored the wise parenting counsel that's found in God's Word. Subsequently their children's motives and desires and goals are framed solely by the world's values.



You can readily identify the detrimental impact of what we've described as you've observed (or raised) children who've been trained to manipulate their parents through tantrums, whining, or negotiations to get what they want. SELF-esteem and its spawn, SELF-gratification, are now perceived as inalienable rights both inside and outside of Christianity. **The genuinely born again must cooperate in helping raise each other up to sacrificially serve our Lord Jesus.**

Please watch our Jesus In Your Home videos: [76. Children: Born With A Sin Nature, Destined For Eternity](#) (Part 1); [77. Children: Born With A Sin Nature, Destined For Eternity](#) (Part 2). These are good tools for family discussion.