

The Augsburg Confession of 1530

Article XII: Repentance

ARTICLE XII

Repentance

- ❖¹ Our churches teach that there is forgiveness of sins for those who have fallen after Baptism whenever they are converted.

1 John 1:9

✝ 1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”



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- ❖² The Church ought to impart Absolution to those who return to repentance [Jeremiah 3:12].

Jeremiah 3:12

† **Jeremiah 3:12** “Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "'Return, faithless Israel,' declares the LORD, 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful,' declares the LORD, 'I will not be angry forever.'”

Daniel 9:9

† **Daniel 9:9** “The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him.”

Deuteronomy 4:31

† **Deuteronomy 4:31** “For the LORD your God is a merciful God; He will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which He confirmed to them by oath.”

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❖³ Now, strictly speaking, repentance consists of two parts. ⁴ One part is **contrition**, that is, terrors striking the conscience through the knowledge of sin.

Isaiah 66:2

✝ "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."

Isaiah 57:15

✚ **Isaiah 57:15** “For this is what the high and lofty One says-- He who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

Psalm 51:17

✚ Psalm 51:17 “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

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❖₅ “The other part is **faith**, which is born of the Gospel [Romans 10:17] or the Absolution and believes that for Christ’s sake, sins are forgiven. It comforts the conscience and delivers it from terror.”

Romans 10:17

† **Romans 10:17** “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

1 John 3:5

✝ **1 John 3:5** “You know that He appeared so that He might take away our sins. And in Him is no sin.”

1 John 1:9

✝ **1 John 1:9** “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”



✝Matthew 9:2 “Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.”

Acts 10:43

✚ **Acts 10:43** “All the prophets testify about [Jesus Christ] that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.”

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❖⁶ Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruit of repentance [Galatians 5:22–23].

Galatians 5:22-23

✚ **Galatians 5:22-23** “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

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- ❖ 7 Our churches condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that those who have once been justified can lose the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 11:6, Mark 4:17

- ✚ **Matthew 11:6** “Blessed is the man who does not fall away (skandalidzo: lose his faith) on account of me.”
- ✚ **Mark 4:17** “But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.”

2 Peter 3:17

† **2 Peter 3:17** “Therefore, dear friends... be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”

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- ❖ They [our churches] also condemn those who argue that some may reach such a state of perfection in this life that they cannot sin.

Hebrews 7:11

✚ **Hebrews 7:11** “If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come?”

Hebrews 7:18-19

† **Hebrews 7:18-19** “The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.”

2 Corinthians 13:11

✝ **2 Corinthians 13:11** “Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.”

Matthew 5:48; Philippians 3:12

- ✦ **Matthew 5:48** “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
- ✦ **Philippians 3:12** “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”

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❖⁹ The Novatians also are condemned, who would not absolve those who had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance.

Novatians

- ❖ Novatian (c 200 AD) was a priest in Rome who held that the lapsed during the Lapsarian Controversy should not be readmitted to the church, which is to be a community of none but saints. Excommunicated in the 250s. The schism spread from Spain to Syria.

Hebrews 6:4-8

† **Hebrews 6:4** “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace....”

Hebrews 6:7-8

† **Hebrews 6:7** “... Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. ⁸ But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.”

2 Thessalonians 2:9

† 2 Thessalonians 2:9 “They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.”

2 Timothy 2:25

✚ **2 Timothy 2:25** “Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.”

Acts 3:19

✚ **Acts 3:19** “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord...”

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- ❖¹⁰ Our churches also reject those who do not teach that forgiveness of sins comes through faith, but command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own.

Galatians 2:16

✚ Galatians 2:16 “Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.”

2 Thessalonians 3:2-3

✚ **2 Thessalonians 3:2** “And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.”

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- ❖ They [our churches] also reject those who teach that it is necessary to perform works of satisfaction, commanded by Church law, in order to remit eternal punishment or the punishment of purgatory.

Acts 26:20; Matthew 3:8

- † **Acts 26:20** “First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.”
- † **Matthew 3:8** “Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

Ephesians 2:8-10

✚ **Ephesians 2:8** “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”