



## Brief Patristic Messages



### “Return Today”\*

*His Eminence, Metropolitan  
Cyprian of Oropos and Fili*

**O**UR DISCOURSE is once again on the subject of Repentance. The life of a true Christian is one of continual Repentance.

The believer is at all times noetically fallen before the throne of the majesty of God; and, with contrition and consciousness of his sinfulness, murmurs the words of the Publican: “O God, be merciful to me!”

“Works,” “actions,” and “good deeds” do not tempt him into the false idea and self-assuredness that he has “earned” Paradise by those things.

Constantly before him is the “darkness” of his heart: the demonic passions that separate him from the source of light and holiness, our Lord and our God.

He continuously laments over, and reproaches, himself.

His unceasing prayer is the prayer of Saint Ephraim:

*“Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see mine own failings and not to condemn my brother!”*

\* \* \*

**My Christian** brother: our times are difficult.



The Devil strives in every manner to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

The only thing that will safeguard us against the devious snares of the Evil One is Repentance.

Not, however, a superficial and momentary Repentance, but one that is a constant spiritual condition and inner work.

This Repentance preserves us in an aura of humility, and the humble-minded person is the only one who is secured.

Inspired by God, the holy Fathers advise us that if, as humans, we should sin and then make a beginning in Repentance, we must not cease from grieving and groaning before our Lord until the time of our death; for, if we become negligent, we will fall once again into sin:

*“For godly sorrow is the bridle of the soul, not allowing it to fall.”*  
*“If one falls into any sin whatsoever and does not show regret commensurate with his error, it is easy for him to fall into the same net.”*

\* \* \*

**My beloved** brother: do not postpone your repentance and your return to our Lord until the morrow, the future, or old age. No one knows what the next day will bear.

Repent today, and allow the will of God to be done tomorrow. Now, while you can, kneel before our Savior with contrition in order to find the calmness which you have lost.

*“This voice cries out to man until his last breath: return today!”*

*“We will not be punished in the future because we have sinned, nor will we be judged on that account (having a changeable and alterable nature), but because, having sinned, we did not repent or did not turn from the wicked path unto the Lord, having received the ability and opportunity for repentance.”* (St. Theognostos)

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\*Source: Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 153 (September 1981), p. 37.