

The 6th R of Repentance

The following story is from By Grace Are Ye Saved by Robert Millet

Some years ago I sat with my counselors in a bishopric meeting. The session was drawing to a close because sacrament meeting would be starting in just ten minutes. A knock came at the door as we were making our way out of the office into the foyer. A young woman from my ward was there, who asked if she could visit with me for a moment. I indicated that we could chat for a bit, but that sacrament meeting would be starting soon. She assured me that we would be together for only a minute or two.

After we had been seated for a few seconds, she said: “Bishop, I need to confess a sin.”

I was startled with the suddenness of the statement, but, managing to hold my composure, I offered the following: “Well, that could take some time, couldn’t it? Shall we meet after the block meetings today?”

She quickly responded: “Oh no! This will only take a second.”

I nodded and asked her to go ahead, and she proceeded to describe in some detail a very serious moral transgression in which she had been involved. It was now about one minute before the meetings were to start, and so I tried again: “Why don’t we get together after Priesthood and Relief Society meetings.”

She then staggered me with, “Well, I don’t know why we would need to, unless it would be helpful to you, or something.”

I indicated that such a meeting might prove beneficial to both of us. She agreed to return.

Three hours later, and after we had exchanged a few pleasantries, I asked her, “How do you feel about what has happened?”

She responded, “Just fine.” I must have shown my perplexity, because she added: “For a number of hours I felt bad about what had happened, but it’s okay now because I’ve repented.”

I couldn’t ask the question fast enough, “What do you mean when you say that you have repented?” (She had explained to me earlier that the transgression had taken place on Friday night, and it was now Sunday afternoon.)

At that point, she reached into her purse, rearranged a few items, and retrieved a yellow sheet of legal-size paper. Pointing one by one to various headings that began with R, she said, “I’ve done this, and this and this, and this, and finally I’ve confessed to you. I’ve repented.”

“It seems to me that you have skipped an R; that your list is missing something,” I said.

A startled but persistent look was in her eyes, and I noted a slight impatience with me as she said, “No, that can’t be. I have everything listed here!”

“The R you’re missing,” I responded, “is Redeemer.”

D&C 19: 16-19 “For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink— Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.