

### Native American Ministries Journey to Repentance #3 by Scott Clark

So our Journey to Repentance should have some repentance in it! No new news there. The act of turning from beliefs and actions that are not within the realm of good faith should be a part of who we are as Christians on an everyday basis. Every word spoken to or by us and every move made in our presence can be seen through this filter. A lot of this comes naturally, but we have to be careful. Everyone picks their battles and the cares of the day wear upon us. Stepping out in faith is often a move away from our comfort zone. The cultural eradication of the Native American Heritage is no longer a matter of national policy. The drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and manufactured and enforced financial difficulties remain as a testament to that kind of condescending contempt which originated in 'The Indian Schools'. Children were taken away from their families forcibly, confined to 'Anglo ways' and punished for expressing their historical traditions.

It might not be a good idea to go onto a reservation and ask for a drink of water. Water rights are still contested in courts across the country. Several treaty challenges have been undertaken in support of Native American Rights including a current suit in Federal Court for a cease and desist order against fracking as a water contamination threat. Native American elders sometimes still have to choose between food and heat in the winter and there was a documented case of freezing to death last winter. An initial step toward ameliorating these conditions might be to give a small donation to Native American supporting Not-for-Profit organizations. There is an "American Indian College Fund" and "A Native American Rights Fund". Addresses available on request. I send a little money to each of these groups every year along with a couple of others, and they share contact information. More next time.