



REPENTANCE

INTRODUCTION:

Repentance occupies a large place in the teachings of both the Old and New Testament. Its importance cannot be overemphasized. Repentance is neither a new topic, nor is it a popular one. It strikes at the very heart of human wickedness. Unsaved sinners and most church members don't want to be reproved for their sin, even by a gracious, loving, fellow Christian.

The daughter of a former president of the United States was being interviewed about her father's sins. The newsman asked, "Don't you think your father should repent?" She quickly replied, "I don't like that word."

Repentance is not a popular thing with any of us, but that is exactly why it needs to be dealt with.

I. WHAT REPENTANCE IS NOT.

- A. Repentance is not _____.
 - 1. When Paul discussed the judgment to come with Felix, the governor, (Acts 24:25) it caused him to fear, but it did not produce repentance in him. The convenient season to turn from sin never came to this trembling sinner.
- B. Repentance is not just _____.
 - 1. A person may be convicted of the fact that before God he is a terrible sinner, and yet never turn to the Lord.
 - 2. Agrippa tried to evade Paul's appeal to turn away from sin with a sneer (Acts 26:27-29). He was convicted but as far as we know those convictions never led him to repentance.
- C. Repentance is not merely _____.

1. A sorrow for sin is a definite antecedent or motive that leads to repentance, but it in itself is not repentance.
2. Paul says, "*Sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret... but sorrow of the world produces death*" (II Cor. 7:10).
3. A person can be sorry for the consequences of sin without being sorry for the sin itself.

II. WHO REPENTANCE IS FOR.

- A. It is needed for the _____.
1. Nowhere is that clearer than in Acts chapter 2.
 - a. It is the day of Pentecost and thousands of celebrants are gathered in Jerusalem.
 - b. The Holy Spirit comes upon the Apostles and they start speaking in tongues.
 - c. Beginning with verse 14 Peter stands and starts to address the crowd.
 - d. Peter tells them, among other things, that THEY have crucified Jesus.
 1. Jesus died on the cross for SINS...they have SINNED, therefore, they helped crucify Jesus!
 - e. In verse 37 they are "pierced to the heart" because they realize their sinfulness.
 1. They ask Peter what they need to do.
 - f. The very first thing that Peter's answer includes in verse 38 is "repentance."
- B. It is needed for the _____.
1. Nowhere else is that clearer than in Acts chapter 8.
 - a. Philip is preaching in Samaria and great things are happening!
 1. People are healed and the city is rejoicing.
 2. Many people are believing the message that Philip is preaching and they are being baptized.
 - b. In verse 13 a man named Simon is baptized as well.

- c. Later, Peter and John come down and start laying hands on people so that they can receive the Holy Spirit.
- d. Simon wants the Holy Spirit too so he offers Peter and John money.
 - 1. Peter is NOT happy. He tells Simon that his heart is not right before God.
 - 2. Now, remember, Simon is a baptized Christian (saint). What is he to do?
- e. In verse 22 Peter tells Simon, “Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.”
 - 1. Simon, a Christian (saint) is told to repent.
 - 2. Repentance is a provision for the saints.

III. HINDRANCES TO REPENTANCE

- A. _____
 - 1. We don’t want to repent because that would be admitting that we were WRONG!
- B. _____ of sin.
 - 1. We don’t repent because we don’t want to quit sinning...it’s got a hold on us.
 - a. Often the drunkard, smoker, drug addict, gambler, etc. want to quit but feel that they can’t.
 - 1. They know they are sinning. They so badly want to stop.
 - 2. They try many times...but fail. Sin has power!
- C. _____
 - 1. Some people plan to repent but they are just waiting for the right time.
 - a. There are a few more “wild oats to sow.”
 - b. There will be “plenty of time to get things right later.”
 - c. They will quit their life of sin and repent...when they are ready.

Read Acts 24:24-25

- d. Two years later Felix is no longer governor and, as far as we can tell, never gets around to repenting.

IV. THE PROCESS OF REPENTANCE

Repentance isn't simply saying, "I'm sorry God." J.W. McGarvey said it this way, "Repentance is a change of will or mind caused by a sorrow for sin and leading to a reformation of life." He gives us a simple 3-step process...

We can use the younger brother in the parable of the "Prodigal Son" to help us illustrate this process. Turn to Luke 15:11 and following. You remember the story...

Read Luke 15:11-16

Now we're ready for the first step in the process: Read the first part of verse 17

- A. Change of _____.
 - 1. In verse 17 it says, "he came to his senses."
 - a. This prodigal son finally realized and admitted that he was wrong.
 - b. He decided that his current condition needed to change.
 - c. He hasn't done anything about it yet but he has taken the first step of changing his mind.
- B. Change of _____.
 - 1. Some people change just because of fear.
 - a. They don't want to spend an eternity in hell...so they change.
 - 2. Some people change just because of pressure.
 - a. Someone (often someone they love) bugs them enough that they give in and change.
 - 3. There needs to be a change of HEART.

Read Luke 15:18-19

- a. This young man is truly sorry...there is sorrow in these verses.
- b. He is admitting that he has sinned against his own father and even against God Himself.

1. He is ashamed, humiliated and ready to accept any consequences.

C. Change of _____.

Read Luke 15:20-21

1. This guy wasn't just "talk." He plans on following through with his change of mind and change of heart!
 - a. In fact, look what he says to his father in verse 21...
2. Repentance means changing your life.
 - a. The prodigal son was willing to become a servant.

Robert South said, "*Repentance has a double aspect; it looks upon things past with a weeping eye, and upon the future with a watchful eye.*"

Repentance begins with a change of mind – a _____.

But there must also be a change of heart – a _____.

Finally there must be a change of life – a _____.

What Then, is Repentance? The Greek word translated "repentance" in the New Testament is "Metanoia." It means "to have another mind" or "to change the mind." Professor J.W. McGarvey defined repentance as: "Repentance is a change of will (or mind) caused by a sorrow for sin and leading to a reformation of life."

It is a change of the inner _____ that affects the outer _____ for the good purpose of God.