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TBC – Arlington, Texas

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Soteriology

Repentance

Repentance and faith belong to the human side of salvation in that they are man's response to the preaching of the Word of God. There are always two sides of the same coin.

Repentance is a turning to God away from your sin and faith is, forgetting all impossibilities, and trusting Him. The Gospel invokes both in a saving response to God. Gospel preaching ought to seek both in the lives of men.

In the scripture we see:

- Repentance toward God AND faith toward Christ.

[Acts 20:21](#) “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- A. Inward recognition of sin (law)
- B. Upward recognition of salvation (grace)

- Repentance from dead works AND faith toward God.

Hebrews 6:1 “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,”

- Repent AND believe.

Mark 1:15 “And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.”

- Repent AND turn to God.

Acts 26:20 “But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”

— REPENTANCE —

I. THE PLACE OF REPENTANCE IN THE WORD OF GOD

Repentance is an integral part of the Gospel message. It was the message of the very first Gospel preacher, John the Baptist — Matthew 3:1,2,8; it was preached by the Saviour Himself — Matthew 4:17; and by the apostles — Mark 6:12; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 26:20.

Repentance is the completer of the Great Commission compare Mark 16:15 (preach the Gospel) with Luke 24:47 (preach

repentance). A gospel message cannot be complete without a call for true repentance. Today's "easy-prayerism" and Hollywood-style 'Christianity' lays little (if any) stress upon this aspect. Hence we have the sad spectacle of professions without possession.

A. GOD COUNTS REPENTANCE IMPORTANT:

Acts 17:30 — "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."

II Peter 3:9 — "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

B. SALVATION DEPENDS ON REPENTANCE:

Luke 13:3,5 — "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish ... I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

James 5:20 — "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner FROM the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

II. THE MEANING OF "REPENTANCE"

The word "repent" or "repentance" occurs 112 times in the Word of God. Any true definition of repentance must come from its Biblical usage, not historical incidents.

A. REPENTANCE INVOLVES A CHANGE OF MIND:

The main Greek word translated ‘repentance’ (metanoeo) literally means “a change of mind.” This change of mind necessarily involves a change of action. This is not an action of “works”. When we repent we turn to God which then automatically turns us from our sin. It’s not a physical action of turning from sin that saves. It is the spiritual turning to God that saves us!

This definition of repentance agrees with all the Biblical examples. For example:

- Exodus 13:17b — “repent and return.”
- I Kings 8:47,47 — “we have sinned ... and ... return.”
- Revelation 2:5 — “repent and do the first works.”
- Ezekiel 14:6 — “repent and turn.” (Also: 18:30.)
- Matthew 3:8 — “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.”
- Acts 26:20 — “do works meet for repentance.”
- Nineveh’s repentance — Matthew 12:41; Jonah 3:5-8.
- Nebuchadnezzar’s repentance — Daniel 4:27-37.
- The Prodigal’s repentance — Luke 15:11-24.
- The Thessalonians’ repentance — I Thessalonians 1:9; 2:14.

Repentance for the remission of sins (i.e. salvation) essentially involves a change in our attitude about:

1. Sin.

Whereas in the past the sinner would live in sin, often enjoying its pleasures — he would now see it in all its ugliness and hideousness, as God sees it. He now hates and detests sin — Psalm 97:10a; has a real sorrow over sins committed — Psalm 38:18; and a broken heart because of his sinfulness — Psalm 51:17.

2. God.

Whereas once the sinner despised God, or had little regard for the work of Christ, he now sees Christ as his only hope for salvation.

(A. Repentance involves a change of mind)

B. REPENTANCE IS NOT REMORSE:

People often associate repentance with acts such as uncontrollable weeping and outward shows of sorrow. This may not necessarily indicate true repentance.

True Bible repentance may or may not involve an outward show of emotions — but it always involves a change of heart, a change of mind, a change of attitude, and a change of action. See: Matthew 21:29.

Many times people think a “sorrow at being caught” shows a regret over the consequences of sin. In reality this is not repentance, but remorse.

II Corinthians 7:10 distinguishes true and false repentance:

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

- **REPENTANCE** = Godly sorrow
- **REMORSE** = Worldly sorrow

Hebrews 12:17 is one of the most misinterpreted scriptures on the subject of repentance. The common explanation is that Esau wanted to, or tried to, repent, but either could not or would not. (This fits with the Calvinistic error of having God dispense repentance and salvation to some, withholding it from others.) Interpreting scripture with scripture, however, gives a different story — one that shows repentance to be a change of mind resulting in a change of action. Read: Genesis 27:30-38.

Hebrews 12:17 “For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

1. Esau Found No Place Of Repentance.

Esau did not want to repent — he was profane (Hebrews 12:16)! He wanted his father to repent — i.e., to change his mind with respect to the blessing, thereby changing his actions and blessing him instead of Jacob. He found no place of repentance in his father’s heart.

2. Though He Sought It Carefully With Tears.

See: Genesis 27:34,38. Unfortunately, Esau's tears were those of regret and remorse.

III. THE WORK OF GOD IN REPENTANCE

Man will not naturally repent. It is the Holy Spirit Who works in the heart of man to produce conviction of sin. God grants repentance in the sense of the gracious operation of His Spirit through the teaching of truth (II Timothy 2:25).

We have declarations of God giving repentance to Israel (Acts 5:31) and granting repentance to the Gentiles (Acts 11:18) which refers to the historic entrance of the Gospel and the opening of the door of faith to these ethnic groups.

A. THE MEANS OF REPENTANCE:

Repentance is accomplished through various means:

1. Through The Preaching Of The Word Of God.

This is the primary means by which God brings man to the place of repentance. It is the Word of God that best reveals to man his true condition and the folly of sin. The Bible will bring a man to the realization of God's holiness and his own sinfulness — Acts 2:37-40.

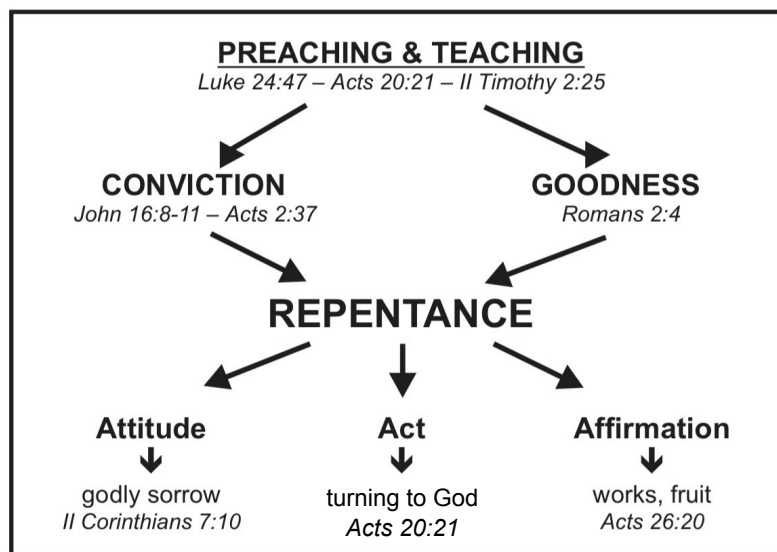
2. Through The Goodness Of God.

Romans 2:4 — “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”

3. Through Chastisement And Church Discipline.

See: II Corinthians 7:8-11; Revelation 3:19. Christians and churches need to repent too!

B. THE PATH OF REPENTANCE:



IV. THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE

While repentance is an inward action, it has outward results. John the Baptist would not baptize anyone unless they showed “fruits [evidence] meet for repentance” — Matthew 3:8 “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.”

After salvation there are outward results of true Bible repentance and they are:

A. A CONFESSION OF SIN TO GOD:

See: Psalm 32:3-5; Matthew 3:6b; Luke 18:13.

B. A CONFESSION OF FAULTS TO MAN:

See: Luke 19:8,9; James 5:16.

C. A FORSAKING OF SIN:

See: Proverbs 28:13; I Peter 3:10,11.

V. THE RESULTS OF REPENTANCE

A. JOY IN HEAVEN — Luke 15:7,10.

B. PARDON AND FORGIVENESS — Isaiah 55:7.

C. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (at the moment of Salvation) — Acts 2:38.

D. BLESSING, AND MERCY — Proverbs 28:13.

E. TRUE LIFE — Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 66:2; Ezekiel 18:21.

F. ANSWERED PRAYER — II Chronicles 7:14. (1)