

REPENTANCE

The previous study identified The Problem in our relationship with God: Sin. Before studying our part in the Solution (Repentance and Baptism) it is good to study God's part of the Solution: the Cross (Level 3, DOCTRINE 2), which will emphasize the power of the gospel and the extent of God's love. Our part in the Solution (Repentance and Baptism) should be a gift to someone who truly understands the gospel: where we stand before God because of Sin and how much God loves us through the Cross.

Repentance is one of the greatest gifts God offers man – a chance to have a true change, a new start. However, due to many misconceptions, some people have a negative understanding that treats repentance as some form of penance (what you do to make up for your sin) combined with a heavy sorrow that makes Christianity more like a dragged-out apology than the joyful reconciliation of a beloved child to their parent. This study should establish a biblical definition of repentance, correct misunderstandings, and describe true repentance.

OPENING QUESTION

What do you believe repentance means or looks like? Why is repentance important?

1) WHO NEEDS REPENTANCE?

Luke 13:1-5

- Who does Jesus say should repent? Everyone must repent.
 - All have the same SIN problem.
 - No matter how religious, successful, or "good" they are.
- What is the choice Jesus gave each of us? Repent OR Perish.

2) WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Acts 26:20-21 – What do you learn about repentance from this scripture?

- **Definition:** Metanoia (Greek) means "mind-change"; to **turn, surrender**, make Jesus Lord.
- Repentance is the **message** preached by Paul, Jesus, John, and the prophets.
- Repentance is **demonstrated by deeds** – your life reflects the change.
- Repentance **leads to opposition**. Some do not want to change. Many do not appreciate being told the truth about their lives.
- Repentance is a **POSITIVE command** – become what we were created to be – like Jesus.
- Repentance is an **ONGOING command** – an ongoing attitude. Can be done in an instant, though its effects can last a lifetime.

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 – What is the difference between worldly and godly sorrow?

- **Describe "worldly sorrow"**
 - Repentance is NOT the same as being sorry.
 - Worldly sorrow is being sorry you were caught in a bad situation.
 - Example: Speeding – worldly: you don't change, you'll be speeding again soon.
- **Describe "godly sorrow"**
 - Leads to repentance which brings salvation (repentance comes before salvation!).
 - Example: You or your girlfriend gets pregnant. Not just sorry about the consequences. Godly sorrow says, "I will never be immoral again."

- Review each characteristic of godly sorrow: no regrets, produces an obvious change in character and lifestyle. You can tell if someone has really repented!

Mark 9:42-48

- How would you describe Jesus' attitude toward sin?
 - Repentance is radical – a radical attitude toward sin...
 - Analogy: if you get cancer what type of attitude would you have?
- What is a typical attitude about sin today? "Sin is okay in moderation."
- What is God's attitude about sin? "Sin is always horrible – deal with it radically!"

Acts 3:19-20

- How would you describe repentance from this scripture?
 - *so that your sins may be wiped out* – repentance is necessary for forgiveness of sins.
 - *that times of refreshing may come from the Lord* – once we repent, there will be times of refreshing (repentance feels good!).

3) APPLICATION

- Do you know people who have repented?
- Have you ever repented like this?
- Do you want to repent like this?
- What do you need to repent of?

OTHER HELPFUL PASSAGES

Acts 2:36-41

- How would you describe these first Christian's repentance?
 - They understood the consequences of their sin and what it did to Jesus on the cross.
 - When our hearts are cut by the Cross we are ready to whatever it takes to fix things.
 - Repentance is a necessary part of our response in God's solution! Therefore, we need to make sure we know exactly what it should look like in our lives.
 - Repentance (with baptism) leads to forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

John 3:3

- How does this scripture describe a person who has repented?
 - Born again: Repentance is not making changes in life, but becoming a new person.
 - Being born again means you have become a new creation. (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)
 - Repentance changes our lives and not just our habits.