

Repent: The Third Step in God's Plan of Salvation

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

- A. Third in our series of lessons on Salvation
 - 1. Hear - listening with the intent to heed
 - 2. Believe - conviction that alters the life-view and motivates a life-change
 - 3. Repent - a reversal of moral purpose moved by godly sorrow
 - 4. Confess - the announcement of faith and repentance by means of publicly acknowledging the name of Jesus Christ
 - 5. Baptism - the washing away of sins that confers adoption into the family of God
- B. Luke 24:45-47; 26:19-20
 - 1. When a person truly repents, he will cease the practice of sin
 - a. But what is repentance?
 - b. What are indications that repentance has occurred?
 - c. What leads one to true repentance?

I. DEFINING REPENTANCE

- A. Misconceptions about repentance
 - 1. That repentance is merely "sorrow"
 - a. 2Cor. 7:9-10 - Repentance is the outcome of godly sorrow
 - 2. That repentance is only "a changed life"
 - a. Acts 3:19 - repentance and conversion are two separate things
 - b. Peter says to 'repent' and be converted'; he is not being redundant; rather, the one leads to the other
 - 3. The order is this:
 - a. First, there is sorrow
 - b. Then, repentance
 - c. And finally, a changed life (conversion)
- B. Definition of repentance
 - 1. The Greek word is metanoeo (meta = change, noeo = thought or mind)
 - 2. W. E. Vine's definition: "A change of mind; signifies to change one's mind or purpose this change of mind involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God"
 - 3. Thayer - "A reversal of moral purpose."

II. EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE

- A. Acts 2:36-38 - Pentecost multitude
 - 1. The reaction of the people is noteworthy: "cut to the heart"
 - a. This shows the power of God's word to convict - Rom. 1:16
 - b. Even though convicted, not all people will respond in the same manner - Acts 7:54 - Stephen's sermon.
 - c. The reply to their question ("what shall we do?") is important.
 - d. Peter commanded them to "repent", which was what Jesus told Him to say - Luke 24:46-47

- B. Acts 3:14-21 - The audience at the temple.
1. Peter acknowledged that they and their rulers acted in ignorance, but that their ignorance was not an excuse, so they must “repent and be converted” - Acts 3:19
 2. Several reasons to repent are given - Acts 3:19-26
 - a. “Your sins may be blotted out,” referring to the ancient practice of erasing mistakes made on papyrus
 - b. “Times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”
 - c. “Here is a positive counterpart to the remission of sins. God provides more than just remission of sins, but refreshment for our spirits” (John Stott)

III. SIGNS OF REPENTANCE

A. 2Cor. 7:11

1. Diligence (KJV, carefulness)
 - a. This can be defined as “earnestness, zeal, with haste accompanying it”
 - b. Being quick to do what is right
 - c. The examples of conversion in the book of Acts demonstrate this diligence by the fact that every conversion described in detail shows people obeying the gospel after one lesson
 2. Clearing of yourselves
 - a. To clear one’s self of blame
 - b. To quickly stop doing what is wrong, if such is the case; or to quickly respond to the offer of forgiveness if one realizes he is guilty of sin
 3. Indignation - This involves a sort of anger, hatred directed toward the sin that required the repentance in the first place
 4. Fear - That the sin might be repeated or lest the sin may not be removed quickly
 - a. How do you react when a bee flies into your hair?
 5. Vehement desire - A fervent wish to be right in God’s eyes
 6. Zeal - “Eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something”
 - a. In this case, to turn from sin and turn to God
 7. Vindication (KJV, revenge)
 - a. As the NIV puts it “what readiness to see justice done”
 - b. To do the right thing
- B. These are the signs of true repentance: Not apathy or half-hearted service, not spin control or confession with reservations, but a desire to do “works befitting repentance” - Acts 26:20

IV. RESULTS OF REPENTANCE

A. Godly sorrow produces repentance

1. Note carefully Paul’s words in 2Cor. 7:9-10
 - a. Not simply “sorrow”, but sorrow that is “godly”
2. The difference between “godly” sorrow and “worldly” sorrow

- a. "Worldly" sorrow is a selfish kind of sorrow
 - 1) When one is sorry because he got caught
 - 2) When one is sorry because what one did made himself look bad; pride-based suicide
 - 3) In worldly Sorrow, one is concerned about one's self
- b. "Godly" sorrow is sorrow directed toward GOD ("godly" is literally "according to God")
 - 1) One is sorry because his actions are sins against God - the attitude of David in Psalm 51:4
 - 2) Also, one is sorry because of the price God paid to remove his sins
- c. Differences:
 - 1) "worldly" sorrow produces regret
 - 2) "godly" sorrow suffers loss in nothing
 - 3) "worldly" produces death
 - 4) "godly" sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation

V. GENERATING REPENTANCE

- A. Nathan's rebuke to David - 2Sam. 12:7-12
 - 1. Make an appeal to God's love - 12:7-8
 - 2. Reveal the sin - 12:9
 - 3. Warn of the consequences - 12:10-12
- B. The gospel of Christ, when properly taught, is designed to produce "godly sorrow" in the same way, and in turn, repentance
 - 1. It appeals to God's love as a basis for repentance - Rom. 2:4
 - 2. It reveals our sin - Rom. 3:23
 - 3. It warns of the consequences - Rom. 2:5-11

Conclusion:

- A. Acts 17:30-31 - You will repent eventually, it is best to do it while you have time to change the outcome of Judgment Day.