

# **Fruit Worthy of Repentance**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## **Introduction:**

- A. Matt. 3:8 - Repentance has often been called the most difficult command
- B. "The facts of the gospel are not hard to understand and neither is forgiveness an undesirable goal, but repentance, bringing the stubborn will in line, is the truly hard part."
  - 1. "When you look through the record of the Savior's earthly ministry, you find that He induced a great many to believe in Him... But when you search for those who repented under the Lord's preaching, you will find but few. When you go out preaching among the people of this country, you will not find it very difficult to induce your hearers to believe the truth concerning Christ, and, when they are prepared in mind and heart for baptism, you will not find it at all difficult to persuade them to submit to that ...You will find no difficulty, provided they have repented and desire to obey the Lord; but how difficult it is to induce men to repent! Sinners outside the church and sinners inside the church cling to their sins, and it appears impossible in many instances to bring them to repentance." (J.W. McGarvey, Chapel Talks, p. 71-72)

## **I. WHAT IS REPENTANCE?**

- A. From Greek metanoia, it is a literal turning around.
  - 1. "A change of mind (heart), as it appears to one who repents of a purpose he has formed or of something he has done; to change one's mind (heart) for the better, to amend heartily with abhorrence of one's past sins; a reversal of moral purpose." (Thayer)
- B. The scriptures define the Bible principle of repentance
  - 1. Matt. 3:8; Luke 5:32; Acts 3:19, 26:20; 2Tim. 2:25
  - 2. Everything indicates that there is a change of mind followed by a correction of life. There is a turning away from something and a turning toward something.
- C. For this reason, repentance involves both will (heart) and work (life).
  - 1. One must want to change, then must exercise the necessary effort to bring about the change. Herein lays the difficulty.

## **II. THE CALL TO REPENTANCE**

- A. Since repentance begins with a change of mind, the mind must know what it must turn from.
  - 1. The Gospel is full of commands and instructions about what pleases and displeases God.
  - 2. It is a message of change. If one is a gossip, a drinker, a smoker, sexually immoral, compromising in conviction, the message will make him uncomfortable.
- B. The message brings conflict.
  - 1. It begins by trying to conquer one's own stubborn will - Luke 9:23
  - 2. It is a message of conflict because it attacks the seat of the problem, the stubborn heart - Rom. 6:16; Gal. 5:17; James 1:14
  - 3. It is a fight that is ongoing, even in the best of us - Rom. 7:22-25

### III. GOD PROVIDES MOTIVATION IN REPENTANCE

- A. Rom. 2:4-10
- B. Vs. 4 - God's kindness leads us to repentance
  - 1. Note that God leads, not forces, us to repentance.
  - 2. Many believe that God's goodness will overlook their sins, but not so!  
The kindness of God is summarized in the word longsuffering
    - a. They mistake for indifference that which holds back the coming of the Judgment.
    - b. 2Pet. 3:9 - God's patience is designed to lead one to repentance
- C. Vs. 5-6, 11 - God's judgment will be fair
  - 1. We recognize the concepts of fairness and justice when it comes to acquitting the good and punishing the lawless. Why can't we see this in the judgment of a just and fair God?
- D. Vs. 7-10 - God's judgment will be real
  - 1. These are not abstract concepts; these are actual realities awaiting all people. God doesn't need for you to believe in Judgment Day in order for it to come; it will come with or without your faith
  - 2. If these facts do not strike fear into your heart and cause you to turn from sin, then nothing will.

### IV. THE FRUIT OF REPENTANCE

- A. 2Cor. 7:9-11
- B. Vs. 10 - No regret
  - 1. No disappointment that sin must be dropped. Instead, real repentance produces the joyful anticipation of God's fellowship in heaven.
- C. Vs. 11 - Zeal and diligence
  - 1. Indignation is self-indignation. It is strong displeasure at something unjust, offensive, insulting you have done against God.
    - a. I am angry at myself for offending God
  - 2. Fear is the horror over the danger of un-repentant sin.
  - 3. Longing and zeal are the new-found enthusiasm to continue to do right and to do it immediately.
  - 4. Avenging of wrong is the restitution one engages when sin is realized., the efforts to make wrong things right.
- D. Vs. 11 - Vindication, a clear record
  - 1. When a change of heart is followed by a change of behavior, fellowship is restored with God and man.
- E. The ultimate fruit: salvation - vs. 10
  - 1. Note how it is contrasted with death in the verse. Repent and live

#### Conclusion:

- A. "Repentance is heart's sorrow, and a clear life ensuing." (Shakespeare)
- B. Biblical repentance lies at the comma in this sentence. It stands between the heartache of realized sin and the sheer joy of forgiveness.
  - 1. Where are you in this sentence?