

REPENTANCE

Acts 2:29-39

Introduction: "Repent" means to renounce. Renounce what? The Bible uses one word - SIN. The Bible teaches that sin is a transgression of the law, the absence of all authority, it caused the fall of Adam and has poisoned every person since. Sin has wrecked our relationships with each other, with ourselves and with God. One cannot possibly have peace with God, with the world or with oneself until something is done with sin. The word "repentance" is missing today from the pulpits for it is an unpopular word. The first sermon Jesus preached was ***"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."***

Jesus came with a heart filled with love and compassion, yet He immediately began to preach of man's guilt and sins. He called upon men to immediately acknowledge his guilt and turn away from sin. A new attitude was essential before He would reveal the love of God.

Until people turn to God in repentance, faith is impossible, salvation is impossible and if salvation is open to all, regardless of age, sex or race, then repentance is also necessary to all.

Jonah preached repentance when he preached to Nineveh. Ezekiel preached repentance when he said, ***"Therefore I will judge you O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin."***

John the Baptist preached repentance when he said, ***"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."***

Repentance is mentioned 70 times in the New Testament.

Jesus said, ***"Except ye repent, ye shall all like-wise perish."***

Peter preached repentance on that great day of Pentecost, he said, ***"Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."***

Paul preached repentance when he said that he "testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ.

God commands repentance. It is a command. It is an imperative.

What does the word mean? Why does it appear over and over through out the Bible?

The dictionary says it means "to feel sorry for or to regret." The Hebrew and Greek mean much more. Just feeling sorry about sin isn't enough. The original word means to "turn around" a complete revolution, 180 degree turn.

When the Bible speaks of repentance, it means to turn away from sin, to walk in the opposite direction from sin.

The parable of the Prodigal Son denotes Repentance. When the son repented, he didn't just sit still and feel sorry about all his sins. He wasn't passive or limp about it. He didn't stay where he was, surrounded by pigs, HE GOT UP AND LEFT. He turned his feet in the other direction.

There are too many Christians who have lost sight of the Biblical meaning of Repentance. They think means little more than shaking their heads over their sins and saying, "my, but I'm sorry I did that" and continue to live just as they always had.

True repentance means more than just "feeling sorry." In true repentance, there must be a turning away, a change of direction, a change of life.

Some men think of repentance as the old time mourners bench. Many think that for true repentance one must mourn for a certain length of time. The story is told of a man at a revival who went to the mourner's bench. There he was met by one who said "hold on brother" and then another who said "let it go brother." The man said he tried to hold on and turn loose at the same time and almost didn't make it

through because of all the confusion about repentance. Falsely produced emotionalism has and will be a stumbling block to many. The repentance referred to in the Bible involves three things: the Intellect, the Emotions and the Will.

I. THERE MUST BE A KNOWLEDGE OF SIN

1. *"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*
 - When Isaiah was convicted of his sins, he said, *"Woe is me..I am a man of unclean lips.."*
 - When Job was convicted that he was a sinner, he said, *"I abhor myself."*
 - When Peter was convicted of his sins, he said *"I am a sinful man."*
 - When Paul was convicted of his sins, he called himself *"the chief of sinners."*
2. Repentance cannot take place unless first there is a movement, a stirring of the Holy Spirit in the heart and mind.
3. It is possible to be convicted of sin and know you are a sinner and even shed tears over your sins and yet still not repent.

II. THE EMOTIONS ARE INVOLVED IN REPENTANCE

1. Many people abhor all emotion and some are suspicious of any conversion that does not take place in a freezer.
2. Almost everyone shows emotions at one time or other but become upset when someone shows emotions during a church service. Some even get upset over a "AMEN!"

III. THE WILL MUST BE INVOLVED IN REPENTANCE

1. There must be a determination to turn away from sin, to change one's attitude toward self, sin and God, to change one's feelings, disposition, purpose in life.
2. There are thousands of people with their names on church rolls, who go to church when convenient, give as they see fit, shake the hand of the preacher, tell him how good the sermon was, who talk the talk of a Christian, but know little Scripture, yet they have never experienced true repentance.
 - These people can take it or leave it. Whenever in a tight, they turn to God in prayer, but otherwise, forget about God and don't have time for Him.
3. There is not one verse of scripture in the Bible that says or indicates that one can be any type of Christian he/she wants and live any type of life that he/she wants to.
4. When Jesus comes into the human heart:
 - He demands that He be Lord and Master.
 - He demands complete surrender.
 - He demands control of the mind.

- He demands that one's body be subject to Him only.
 - He demands all one's talents.
 - He demands all one's work and labor to be performed in His name.
5. Too many of today's professing Christians would give up going to Church before they would give up getting a new freezer. Given a choice between making a down payment on a new car or contributing to the building of a new education building, it is easy to see what their decision would be.
- Thousands of so-called Christians are putting money and the tithes which make up our high standard of living, ahead of the teachings of Jesus.
 - They find time for the lake, movies, travel, television but can't find time to attend church.
 - They can save toward a new home, car or television but can't afford to tithe.
 - The Bible calls all this - IDOLATRY.

CONCLUSION:

1. A change must take place in Repentance.
 - Fingers are pointed at the idol worshipers, the heathen but the only difference is that our graven images are made of chrome, have thermostats, channel selectors and instead of jeweled eyes, instead of gold, the surfaces are easy to clean, life time shiny polished surfaces of cars and t.v. cabinets.
2. Jesus demands Lordship over such things. He wants us to yield everything, social life, family life, business life and personal, private life. Jesus must have first place in everything we do and say. When we have truly repented, we will have given God first place in everything.
3. It is useless to try to keep back this or that, live some for Jesus but keep an area private for our own private use. Don't expect Jesus to give out 500% rewards for 25% surrenders.
4. Do you have an area of your life that you have not surrendered to the Lord? Are you giving Jesus 100% or have you been holding back?
5. Repentance is 100% surrender.