

# True Repentance



"Repentance is no fun at all. It is something harder than merely eating humble pie. It means unlearning the self-conceit and self-will that we have been training ourselves into for thousands of years."

C.S. LEWIS



**PRAY FIRST:** O Holy Spirit, thou hast loved me and entered my heart, implanted there eternal life, revealed to me the glories of Jesus.

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## Understanding the Truth

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### Discussion:

- When you hear the word "**REPENT**," what is the first thing that comes to your mind? In your opinion, what is the difference between repentance and regret?

## True Repentance versus Regret

**Repent** (Gk. "*metanoeo*") means *to think again*. It speaks of knowing something after the fact, and it signifies *a change of mind* accompanied by *a true change of heart toward God*. This change of mind leads to a change of behavior. **Remorse** (Gk. "*metamelloamai*"), on the other hand, means to regret with little or nothing more than a selfish dread of the consequences of what one has done, but with no change of heart.

## The Importance of True Repentance

- A. Why is true repentance important, according to these verses?
1. Luke 13:1-5: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Luke 24:47: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Hebrews 6:1-3: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Since true repentance is important to *genuine salvation, true Gospel preaching, and real spiritual growth*, then it can be assumed that false repentance can lead to *false Gospel preaching, false assurance of salvation, and false spiritual growth*. True repentance is not only essential to true conversion, but is it also something that continues to take place in the life of the growing believer.

## Repentance as a Part of True Salvation

- A. According to John 16:8-9, why does man need to repent in the first place?
- B. Can man come to a realization of this need on his own? (*Read John 3:19-20; Ephesians 2:1; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4*)
- C. According to John 15:22-24, what must happen to a person before repentance can take place? (*Cf. Romans 10:14-17, Matthew 7:24*)

Because man is *dead in sin* (*Ephesians 2:1*) and *blind spiritually* (*2 Corinthians 4:4*), the only way that he can come to a realization of his need to change his view and attitude toward God is by the Spirit of God and the Word of Christ.

- D. What does God use to bring a person to the realization of his need? (*Read Romans 2:4*)

E. When true repentance is occurring, what does it lead to, according to these verses?

1. 2 Timothy 2:25: \_\_\_\_\_

2. 2 Corinthians 7:10: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Acts 11:18: \_\_\_\_\_

## Discerning True Repentance

**Read Luke 3:1-18.** When John came preaching *a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins*, he indicated, through his preaching, **five signs of true repentance** that will be seen in the life of an unbeliever:

1. True repentance causes you to *come to grips with your sin*. (v.5)

The prophecy of Isaiah is a word picture that demonstrates *God's way into the heart*. John is the voice calling people to prepare themselves to receive the Lord. But before one can be ready for this, certain things need to be done.

- *"Every ravine will be filled..."* A ravine speaks of the low, base, deep things of the heart. The hidden, ugly things of life must be brought up.
- *"...every mountain and hill will be brought low..."* This speaks of the lofty sins of pride, self-exaltation, and self-righteousness.
- *"...the crooked will become straight..."* This speaks of the devious, scheming things that need to be straightened out.
- *"...the rough roads smooth..."* This refers to the things that clutter the path to salvation, making it difficult or impossible.

2. True repentance recognizes *divine judgment*. (v.7)

3. True repentance rejects *religious acts*. (v.7)

4. True repentance renounces any other *means of salvation*. (v.8)

5. True repentance reveals *spiritual fruit*. (vv.9-14)

## Discovering True Repentance

**Read 2 Corinthians 7:8-13.** Here are **six marks of how true repentance looks** in the life of a believer:

1. True repentance produces an \_\_\_\_\_ to correct the wrong.  
*"For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you..."*
2. True repentance reflects \_\_\_\_\_ to clear oneself from blame.  
*"...what vindication of yourselves..."*

3. True repentance results in an \_\_\_\_\_ at sin and its effects.  
*"...what indignation..."*
4. True repentance produces a \_\_\_\_\_ for God and His Word.  
*"...what fear..."*
5. True repentance results in a \_\_\_\_\_ to be pleasing in God's sight.  
*"...what longing..."*
6. True repentance reflects a \_\_\_\_\_ to see justice done.  
*"...what zeal, what avenging of wrong!"*

True repentance involves being convinced of:

- The **fact** of sin—*we have done so without denying it.*
- The **faith** of sin—*we have done so without excusing it.*
- The **folly** of sin—*we have done so foolishly.*
- The **filth** of sin—*we have defiled ourselves.*
- The **fountain** of sin—*it all comes from the corrupt nature.*
- The **fruit** of sin—*the wages of every sin is death.* (Matthew Henry, *Covenant of Grace*, p.59)

**True repentance** is a *grace of God's Spirit* whereby a sinner is *inwardly humbled and visibly reformed*. True repentance also involves these six ingredients:

- **Sight of sin**—*do you recognize sin for what it is?*
- **Sorrow of sin**—*the Hebrew word to be sorrowful signifies "to have the soul as it were crucified."*
- **Confession of sin**—*your confession must be sincere, voluntary, and exact.*
- **Shame for sin**—*our sins have put Christ to shame.*
- **Hatred for sin**—*you must hate it enough to forsake it.*
- **Turning from sin**—*there must be a turning from the heart, from all sin, unto God in faith.*  
 (Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of True Repentance*, pp.18-58)

## True Repentance and Spiritual Growth

To demonstrate the importance of repentance as it relates to spiritual growth, consider the words of Christ to the seven churches of Asia Minor in Revelation 2-3. To the five churches that were indicted by Christ, He provided one consistent cure: *repent* (2:5, 16, 22, 3:3, 19).

- Revelation 2:5—*"Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent."*
- Revelation 2:16—*"Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth."*
- Revelation 2:22—*"Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds."*

- Revelation 3:3—“So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.”
- Revelation 3:19—“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.”

## Embracing the Truth

### Knitting the truth of God’s Word into our lives



- As you see the marks of true repentance, how would you describe the daily repentance in your life?
- Based on what you have learned today how can you discern true repentance versus false repentance?

### APPLICATION

#### Being a doer of the Word

1. What did I learn (“teaching”)?
2. Where do I fall short (“reproof”)?
3. What do I need to do about it (“correction”)?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life (“training”)?



### ACCOUNTABILITY

#### Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **LIFE** and **MINISTRY**?

- Assess your overall energy in life and ministry:

(Unstable) 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      (Stable)

- Assess your **feelings of effectiveness** in your ministry:

(Unstable) 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      (Stable)

## Obeying the Truth—your mission this week

### Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



Over the next week, write down sins in your life. What does the Bible say about these sins? Do you fully agree with what the Bible says? Pray and ask God to help you run away from sin and to Him. Note: *True repentance is a hard work.*



### **MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK:** Romans 2:4

*"Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"*



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### **EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT**

Piper, John. *"Repentance, Forgiveness and the Gift of the Spirit"*. Desiring God. <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/repentance-forgiveness-and-the-gift-of-the-spirit>. Web. 25 November 1990

MacArthur, John. "What is Biblical Repentance?" Grace to You. 13 July 2009. <http://www.gty.org/resources/articles/A330/what-is-biblical-repentance?Term=repentance>. Web. 13 July 2009.

## The Importance of True Repentance

- A. Why is true repentance important, according to these verses?
  - 1. unless you repent, you will perish
  - 2. for forgiveness of sins
  - 3. it is an elementary principle of the faith

## Repentance as a Part of True Salvation

- A. to be saved from God's judgment
- B. no
- C. the standard of Christ's Word must be heard
- D. God's kindness, tolerance, and patience towards that person
- E. When true repentance is occurring, what does it lead to, according to these verses?
  - 1. knowledge of the truth
  - 2. salvation
  - 3. life

## Discovering True Repentance

1. earnestness
2. the need
3. indignation
4. fear
5. longing
6. zeal



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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.