

Repentance

Repentance is a fundamental concept in Christian life that involves a deep, heartfelt turning away from sin and a turning toward God. It is more than just feeling sorry or regretful for wrongdoing; repentance is a change of mind and heart that results in a transformation of behavior and actions.

Key aspect of repentance:

Recognition of Sin: Acknowledging one's sins and understanding how they have separated us from God.

Repentance is one of the steps we take to receive the salvation that God offers to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Acts 2:36-38 (KJV): "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Repentance is crucial for spiritual growth and salvation.

Repentance is a necessary step in being reconciled to God and is often the first step in the journey of a Christian life.

A. WHAT REPENTANCE IS NOT

1. Not Just Feeling Guilty: Feeling guilty about our sins precedes repentance but is not repentance itself.

- Acts 24:25 (KJV): "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

2. Not Just Being Sorry For Your Sin: - Worldly sorrow only regrets consequences, while godly sorrow leads to repentance

- 2 Corinthians 7:10 (KJV): "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

3. Not Just Trying To Be A Good Person: - Self-effort to be good lacks acknowledgment of the need for repentance from sin.

- Isaiah 64:6 (KJV): "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

4. Not Becoming Religious: - Religious actions without true repentance are insufficient

- Matthew 3:7-10 (KJV): "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

5. Not Just Knowing The Truth: - Mere intellectual belief without transformation is inadequate

- James 2:19-20 (KJV): "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

B. WHAT TRUE REPENTANCE IS

1. Being Sorry To God For Your Sin: - True repentance involves sorrow towards God, recognizing sin's offense against Him.

- Psalm 51:1-4 (KJV): "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

2. Being Truthful About Your Sin: - Confession to God is essential for forgiveness.

- Psalm 32:5 (KJV): "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah."

3. Turning Away From Your Sin: - Repentance requires renouncing sin for mercy

- Proverbs 28:13 (KJV): "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."
- Repentance requires turning away from sinful behaviors. Zechariah 1:4 (KJV): "Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying,

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD."

4. Hating Sin: - Genuine repentance involves a hatred for sin

- Hebrews 1:9 (KJV): "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

5. When Possible, Paying Back To Others What You Owe: - Restitution is part of genuine repentance.

- Luke 19:8 (KJV): "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

6. Turning From The World: - Repentance involves rejecting worldly values.

- 1 John 2:15 (KJV): "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

7. Turning From Yourself: - True repentance means living to please Christ, not oneself.

- 2 Corinthians 5:15 (KJV): "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

8. Turning From The Devil: - Repentance involves rejecting Satan's influence.

- Acts 26:18 (KJV): "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

9. Turning To God: - Repentance is returning to God.

- Zechariah 1:3 (KJV): "Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts."

10. Turning To Right Living:

- Romans 6:13 (KJV): "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."