

REPENTANCE

Repent ye, and believe the gospel, Mark 1:15

There is a great divide in "fundamentalism over the doctrine of repentance. My experience tells me that everybody agrees that repentance is necessary, but not everybody agrees as to what repentance really is. So this morning, I am going to preach three points: First, false beliefs about repentance. Second, facts about repentance, and third faith and repentance.

FALSE BELIEFS ABOUT REPENTANCE

THE BELIEF THAT REPENTANCE IS TURNING AWAY FROM SIN MEANING STOP SINNING

If turning from your sins means to stop sinning, then people can only be saved if they stop sinning.

There is not one person who can live a day without sin

- Romans 14:23 says, "*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin*"
- James 4:17 says, "*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*"

Which sins are we supposed to turn from? All of them? Some of them? Sins of commission? Sins of omission?

The only sin you've got to turn from is the sin of unbelief.

A SECOND FALSE BELIEF IS THAT REPENTANCE IS SORROW FOR SIN

Repentance is not sorrow for sin. Repentance is the result of sorrow for sin.

II Corinthians 7:10, *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.*

We must build doctrine on the word of God, not human experience.

I've heard people give testimony of how they came to the altar and wept and prayed and begged God to save them and He did.

This kind of teaching suggests to us the false idea that God is basically unwilling to save sinners, and they must beg and plead with God in order to be saved.

If you believe that you've got to beg God to be saved, I've got some good news for you: God wants us to be saved more than we want to be saved.

And if you've got to ask Him to save you more than once, God is a liar. He didn't say you had to ask Him ten times or twice. He said, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*

Look where this stuff leads. I had a preacher tell me that his 7 year old grandson has come to the altar seeking to be saved three weeks in a row, but that he refused to share the Gospel with him because he did not show evidence of repentance

For crying out loud. A seven year old kid can read and write, add and subtract. He can lie, cheat, steal, sass his mom and dad at seven, but can't be saved. So the kid comes to the altar in response to a Gospel invitation only to be sent back to his seat. I suggest that if a child can respond to an invitation, a child can be saved.

Don't misunderstand. You cannot be saved until you realize your sinful state. You've got to be convicted of sin. You've got to see that you are guilty before God.

THIRD, REPENTANCE IS PENANCE

Penance is basically a Roman Catholic doctrine that has to do with paying some kind of penalty so that your sins might be absolved

The penalty for sin is death. Ezekiel 18:4 reads, "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*"

Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death!" and Jesus paid it all on the cross

People have actually tortured themselves trying to atone for their sins, but that is a waste of time. The only atonement for sin is death

Dr. John R. Rice, used to say, "If you go to Hell, you pay your own way; but you go to Heaven on a free pass.

The Philippian jail asked, *what must I do to be saved?* The answer is *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

FACTS ABOUT REPENTANCE

REPENTANCE IS PART OF THE GOSPEL

Luke 24:47 says that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

Jesus said, *except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.*

Act 2:38 says, *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.*

Luke 5:32 says, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

WE ARE COMMANDED TO REPENT

Act 17:30 *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:*

The question is: what does repent mean

Some think it means turning from sin. But that can't be because many times we have God Himself repenting

THE WORD REPENT OR IT'S VARIANT APPEARS ABOUT 111 TIMES

About 46 times in the OT and about 65 times in the NT

And 37 times in the OT, it is God who is repenting, or refusing to repent

So 37 times in the OT repentance has to do with God and only 9 times do we read of man repenting

Now, if "repent" means to turn from sin, we have a problem. We have God turning from sin.

THE GREEK WORD FOR REPENT [METANOIA] MEANS TO CHANGE YOUR MIND

According to a Greek dictionary of New Testament words, "to change one's mind."

The definition from the Strong's Concordance of metanoeo [another variant] is, "to think differently"

FAITH AND REPENTANCE

NOW, HOW IS A PERSON SAVED? BY SIMPLE BELIEF

In Acts 16:30 the jailer said, *What must I do to be saved?*

Paul said, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.* So it is clear. If repentance is necessary to being saved, and it is; then the answer must be to believe.

Then we conclude that when a person gets saved they repent of their unbelief.

When the 3000 at Pentecost gladly received his word, they repented

When Jesus said to Nicodemus, ye must be born again, and Nicodemus was born again, he repented

When the great multitude in Thessalonica believed they repented

Some people foolishly think that unless you say the word repent in your sermon, you are not preaching the Gospel

They call it shallow soul winning, and easy believism, and easy prayerism

I would like for somebody to explain hard believism, and hard prayerism

The Bible says, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved

The thief on the cross prayed an easy prayer when he said, remember me. . .

The publican prayed and easy prayer when he prayed, be merciful to me a sinner

I said to somebody recently that I believe that salvation is nothing more than simple childlike faith in Christ. He said, It's more than that. It leaves out repentance. But I contend that when you tell a person to believe in Christ you are telling them to repent

You are telling them to turn from their unbelief to belief

FAITH AND REPENTANCE ARE ONE AND THE SAME

Spurgeon said, Faith and repentance, like Siamese twins, are vitally joined together. Faith and repentance are but two spokes in the same wheel, two handles of the same plow.

John Rice said faith and repentance are the same

WE HAVE BEEN ACCUSED BEFORE OF NOT HAVING THE WORD REPENT IN OUR GOSPEL TRACT, AND THAT MEANS THAT WE ARE PREACHING A FALSE GOSPEL

If that be true, then the Book of John is a false gospel because it doesn't contain the word repent either

Now, look at John 20:31, But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Now, this is the one book with the express purpose of showing people how to get saved, and not one time in the entire Book is the word repent even mentioned, yet the word believe is used more than 90 times

Now, if repentance is necessary and it's not mentioned in the Book of John what's the conclusion? Simply this, when a man gets saved, he turns from unbelief to belief. He repents of his unbelief

THE BIBLE IS FULL OF VERSES THAT SAY

Believe, or have faith and you are saved

The word repent is used a handful of times with respect to salvation

And first grade level Bible interpretation says that you always interpret the few in light of the many

When there are many, many more verses that say have faith and/or believe and only a handful of verses that say repent in the context of salvation, then it must be that repent means to turn from unbelief to belief in Christ

WHY DO PEOPLE GO TO HELL

Because of sin? No, otherwise we'd all be in hell. It's because of unbelief

He that believeth on the son hath life, he that believeth not the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him

To him give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sin

Thy faith hath made thee whole

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

For by grace are ye saved through faith

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life

SO WHEN YOU TURN TO BELIEF IN CHRIST YOU REPENT

The only sin you must give up is unbelief

But, if you believe Christ, you believe sin is wrong because He said sin is wrong

If you believe in Christ you believe He is the only way because He said He was the only way

If you believe Christ you believe the Bible because He said the Scripture cannot be broken

When a person turns to Christ they turn from sin, because He is our righteousness

But I don't believe that when a person repents and believes the Gospel they quit must quit sinning. They believe sin is wrong

But all this is a change in believe. Change in behavior comes second

Just because a person believes in Christ doesn't mean that they are going to give up their sin. The believe it's sin, but overcoming that sin might take years

False repentance preachers focus on sin. Real repentance focuses on the Savior

False repentance preachers develop a judgmental attitude about others. The line goes something like this: If they get walk the aisle in my church they got saved, if they walked the aisle in another church then didn't repent

False repentance preachers generally frown on soul winning

SO WHEN IT SAYS REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL

It doesn't mean give up sin and believe the Gospel. It means change your mind and believe the Gospel

When Peter said, Repent and be baptized. He meant, change your mind about Christ and believe

When Jesus said, Unless ye repent ye shall all likewise perish, He meant, believe, because the Bible says that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life

When it says, Christ did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, He meant for sinners to believe the Gospel, because that's how sinners are saved

When Peter said, Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, he meant put your faith in Christ as the context clearly teaches

We are to repent of unbelief to enter salvation

A KEY WORD: PERISH

2 Peter 3:9 says, *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

Luke 13:5 *I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

How does a man keep from perishing? John 3:15 says *that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

It can't be clearer. Repent means to turn from unbelief to belief in Christ