



LESSON TWO - REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

Abstract

The first of the foundations mentioned in Hebrews 6:1 is "repentance from dead works." How does Satan and the world attack this foundation stone? It is with worldly erosion of conviction. From a doctrinal or theological standpoint, liberalism replaces true repentance with "situational ethics". We must be very careful that relative-ism doesn't hinder our ability to repent of sin.

The Necessity of Repentance

When a person hears the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one's first step toward salvation is BELIEVING. However, believing must be followed with repentance. With much liberal preaching today, the teaching is that a person goes from BELIEVING directly to SALVATION, rather than believing to repentance (the next step). I once mentioned to a friend of mine that according to his doctrinal position, *he believed in his believing and trusted in his trusting*. I pointed out that the average Christian believes that the fact that they are believer is the reason why they are saved -- not the fact that Jesus Christ died on Calvary.

Matthew 3:1-8 In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. They went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the

region round about Jordan and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 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. (KJV).

Jesus also preached repentance as we notice in these two scriptures:

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 13: 3-5 I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

The Aspects of Repentance

Repentance includes an emotional aspect and an intellectual aspect. Both the spirit and the soul are involved in repentance. The one part of the nature of man that does not repent is the body (or flesh) and it has to be crucified (mortified, made dead). Consider the *emotional aspect* as Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 7:10 -- "For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Here the Bible speaks of a Godly sorrow and a worldly sorrow. Worldly sorrow is often demonstrated by people in trouble (i.e. the jail house religion, deathbed repentance), or as one man said "there are no atheist in foxholes". But worldly sorrow does not result in true repentance. God knows the



difference. Paul suggest that there are seven "fruits" of repentance in 2 Corinthians 7:11.

- "what *carefulness* it wrought in you" - true repentance causes a man to be careful in his words and actions, conduct.
- "what *clearing* of yourselves" – one will examine himself fully and he will be sure to "clean up" his act.
- "what *indignation*" - one becomes indignant of sin and hates it. He is offended by wrong doing, even when it is his own wrong doing.
- "what *fear*" - he fears God and the result of sin.
- "what vehement *desire*" - one desires to make things right
- "what *zeal*" - not only does he desire to do right, but he begins to do it immediately.
- "what *revenge*" - he now does not tolerate sin either for himself or for his family, or his church.

Repentance must include three things (1) contrition, (2) remorse, and (3) a change of behavior. Beside the emotional aspect as shown above, there is an intellectual aspect. Basically this is a "change of one's mind". There are three Greek words used for repentance in the New Testament.

- Metanoeo - to change the mind for the better; to change one's attitude toward sin. (Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38)
- Metanoia - a change of mind toward sin and its CAUSE, not just its consequences (Matthew 9:13; Luke 24:47)
- Metamelomai - to regret the consequences of sin, not just the cause (Matthew 21:28-32; 27:3)

The VOLITIONAL aspect of repentance is the "will factor". The will of man must be broken.

This brokenness will result in two things as we read in Isaiah 55:7:

Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him turn unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Here we have the aspect of CONFORMITY. It is not enough to just turn over a new leaf, but one must TURN AWAY from sin and TURN TOWARD God. A person must OBEY God. They must conform to the will of God and God's plan for their life. Repentance does not just bring *reformation* but results in *transformation* as one receives the Holy Spirit.

LIFE APPLICATION:

Repentance begins with faith in what God has to say about sin in our lives - *sin brings forth death*. Eternal life can only come once we have repented from sin. True repentance means to turn away from sin and to turn to God. The sinner that prays a "sinners prayer" must acknowledge and confess that he or she is a sinner and sincerely ask for God's mercy, grace, and strength to overcome temptation and the actual acts of sin.