

Abundant Life Lesson 2 - Repentance

Why are We Studying Repentance?

Because Repentance is an essential part of salvation. We are commanded to repent:

Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Acts 17:30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

Luke 13:3 No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 3:19 Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out,

What is Repentance?

There are actually two different words in the Greek translated as Repentance by the KJV in the New Testament. To truly repent we must fulfill both meanings. They are:

Metamellomai - to feel regret; to care afterwards; to be sorry for.

Metanaeo - to think differently, to change one's mind, purpose, or opinion, to make an "about face" and walk a different direction.

Understanding the two different words helps to clarify some scriptural passages. For example, in II Corinthians 7:8-10 Paul is writing about a letter that he had written the church earlier and says that he did not repent but yet repented. Paul did not have a change of mind about what he said in the letter (*metanaeo*) but did regret that he had to write the letter (*metamellomai*).

Matt 27:3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. NLTse

Judas Iscariot, after that he had betrayed Jesus, was "filled with remorse" (*metamellomai*). He felt sorry for what he had done. But Judas never "repented" (*metanaeo*) and changed from the direction of destruction and instead went and hanged himself, taking his own life. Many people feel sorry after they sin against God, but just

Abundant Life Lesson 2 - Repentance

feeling sorry for your sin afterwards or "being caught" is not in itself true repentance. It must be accompanied with a desire to change one's mind, action, and direction.

2 Cor 7:10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

Paul said that godly grief brings repentance (metanaeo) that leads to salvation without regret (metamelloi). When you repent God's way, it brings a change in direction and living of which you will not be ashamed or regret! It is obvious that "godly sorrow" is more than just saying "I'm sorry."

Examples of Repentance:

Jacob - In Genesis 35, Jacob and his house went back to the Bethel (the house of God) and repented before God. Jacob and his household did three things to repent:

1. Put away strange gods from among them. They removed everything from their lives that separated them from the true God.
2. Cleansed themselves. This representative of how we must cleanse ourselves by putting off the filthiness of the flesh and spirit (II Corinthians 7:1). We do this by obeying the Word of God (Psalms 119:9).
3. Changed their garments. We must not stop at repentance but do everything that God has commanded us for salvation and lay aside our garments of sin so that we can put on the garment of salvation (Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 3:18; 7:14; I Peter 5:5).

The City of Ninevah - In the book of Jonah, God sent the prophet Jonah to preach to this city that it would be destroyed unless they repented. God did spare the city because the city truly repented because they:

1. Fasted - They went without food for three days
2. Turned from their wickedness - "Metanaeo" repentance.
3. They turned from violence - They stopped trying to save themselves and began to trust in God and His Word.

The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar - In Daniel chapter 4:27, the prophet Daniel instructed the king on how to truly repent. He told Nebuchadnezzar to:

1. Break off his sins by practicing righteousness - Replace your sins by doing right.
2. Break off your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed. Nebuchadnezzar was repenting of pride, therefore true repentance included outwardly doing the opposite of what he was inwardly repenting of.
3. That there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity. In other words, if he truly repented and continued in that repentance, God might spare him.

Abundant Life Lesson 2 – Repentance

The Prophet Isaiah's Instructions - In Isaiah 55:6-7, the prophet gives us excellent insight into true repentance:

1. Seek the Lord and call on him - repentance must be made to the Lord and must be verbal.
2. Let the wicked forsake his way - the person's actions should agree with their verbal commitment to God.
3. Let the unrighteous forsake his thoughts - the person must think differently and change their opinions to match the Word of God.
4. Let him return to the Lord - If a person does, verse 7 says that God will "abundantly pardon."

The Corinth Church - In II Corinthians 7:9-11 (NIV), Paul mentioned seven positive changes that were noticeable in their lives as a result of their true repentance:

1. Earnestness
2. Eagerness to clear themselves
3. Indignation
4. Alarm
5. Longing
6. Concern
7. Readiness to see justice done

Restitution in Repentance

Restitution means to restore what has been taken or damaged. It is largely a forgotten part of repentance but one that is absolutely essential and is always a characteristic of Godly repentance. Notice the following scriptures:

Matt 3:8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

Luke 3:8a Bear fruits in keeping with repentance.

Acts 26:20b ...that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

The words "keeping with" in Greek mean "suitable, comparable, or deserving." When we truly repent, we must restore what is appropriate for what we have done wrong. In some things there is absolutely nothing that we can do, but many times, we can make things right or at least attempt to make things better. For example, when a thief truly repents, they should, if possible, return what they stole. If you repent of a lie, you should apologize also to the ones to whom you lied and tell them the truth. If your sin hurt somebody else, then you should first ask God to forgive you and then ask that person to also forgive you. If the sin is directly against God, then no physical restitution is

Abundant Life Lesson 2 – Repentance

necessary.

Parables of Repentance

There are two main parables of Jesus which teach on repentance.

1. Parable of the two sons (Matthew 21:28-32)
2. Parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32)

A Summary of Repentance

From all of these examples and the scriptures that we have studied, we can learn that godly repentance has four essential parts:

1. A person must make a change of direction from a lifestyle of sin and turn from sin in their mind and actions.
2. A person must have an attitude of regret to the sin of their past and develop a hatred toward the things that they used to do that were not pleasing to God.
3. A person must sincerely call out to God for help and trust in and repent to God. Only God can forgive and truly make a change in our life. It is to God alone that we are to confess our sins.
4. A person must make restitution for what they have done in an applicable manner if possible.

Repentance for the Saved

Repentance does not complete the work of salvation in your life, but is only one of the first steps. You must continue on into Water Baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). Even after a person has been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, they will stumble and even sin. We must repent of our sins even then. When we do, God will forgive us. John was writing to baptized and spirit-filled believers when he wrote:

I Jn 1:7-10 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.