

# Lesson 3

## Repentance From Dead Works and Faith Towards God



# 1. WHAT DO THE MINISTRIES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, JESUS CHRIST, AND THE APOSTLES HAVE IN COMMON?

They all preached repentance (turning from our way to God's way).

- A. John The Baptist – Matthew 3:1-2
- B. Jesus Christ – Matthew 4:17, Matthew 11:30 and Acts 17:31.
- C. The Apostles – Mark 6:12 and Acts 2:38

## 2. IS PENANCE THE SAME AS REPENTANCE?

No. The word ‘Penance’ means “to attempt to atone for your sins by acts of self-abasement.” Such a word does not even appear in Scriptures. The word “repentance” comes from the Greek word “metonoia,” which means “to turn, to be converted.”

Repentance is not one or two acts of contrition, regret or sorry (hoping that God will forgive because the person is make himself worthy of forgiveness) but it is A TOTAL CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION OF OUR LIFE. It is a “once-and-for-all” change from darkness into God’s marvelous light.

The Pharisees thought they could be accepted and justified by God on their own merit and “good works.” Jesus condemned this practice [Read Matthew 9:11-13]. Many folks in religious circles are trying to prove their worth by the food they eat, the clothes they wear, the lack of make-up they have on. These are dead works, and do not give us acceptance by God.

### 3. IS REPENTANCE FOR EVERYBODY?

Yes. When Peter finished his sermon on the day of Pentecost, his listeners cried, “What must we do?” They were convicted of their sin by the Holy Spirit.

*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 give of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:39).*

Today, people feel all they need to do is to “believe.” This word, in the Greek, implies action. To believe is to obey and to obey is to believe. To believe is to obey and to obey is to repent.

*...But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3).* Christ tried to move the religious to repentance.

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and commanded them to go and preach (teach) repentance and remission of sins.

*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among ALL nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47).*

## 4. HOW DO WE ATTAIN REPENTANCE?

No person can earn repentance: God must grant repentance unto life [See John 6:37-40]. The first sign that a person is being touched by God can be seen when he reveals a sorrow over his sinful life.

*For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but he sorrow of the world worketh death (II Corinthians 7:10).*

When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up in the Temple, he spoke of his unworthiness. ([Read Isaiah 6:5]. Likewise, when we get a revelation of Jesus, we will see ourselves as we really are and turn from our wickedness.

There is a time when we repent, and that is God's time, not ours. The Bible says Esau sought God with tears but did not find repentance because he rejected his time of visitation. [Read Hebrews 12:16-17]. Now is the time for any opposed to the truth of the Doctrine of Christ to repent so that God will give repentance unto the acknowledging of the truth. [Read II Timothy 2:25.

Remember this, that godly sorrow is NOT repentance; but a godly sorrow, if allowed to work in our lives, will bring us to repentance. We can be sorry for our sins and never repent. Repentance is not being sorry, but turning from our way to God's way.

## 5. IS THERE SOMETHING OTHER THAN OUR SIN WHICH IS INCLUDED IN THIS DOCTRINAL FOUNDATION?

Yes! The Bible tells us that men make laws and practice religious ceremonies which may not be based upon the Word of God, but upon the traditions of men. These observances usually appear to have great spiritual meaning but there is actually no spiritual life in them. These religious observances are called “dead works.” We usually believe these practices will earn us the favor of God.

***Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away (II Timothy 3:5).***

***Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and no after Christ (Colossians 2:8).***

***Not by works of righteousness which we have done, according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5).***

FOR FURTHER STUDY: See Mark 7:7-9 concerning the traditions of men.

## 6. WHY MUST WE REPENT FROM DEAD WORKS?

We must keep our worship of God pure. We must worship God in spirit and in truth. When we depend upon our works, we are trying to make ourselves acceptable to God, rather than coming to Him on the merits of the shed blood of Christ. We are only made worthy by Christ's blood, not by any works of righteousness which we may have done.

See Matthew 15:3-6; Isaiah 64:6: I Peter 1:18, 19.

## 7. WHAT IS FAITH?

A definition of faith could be:

***Now faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see...(Hebrews 11:1 Moffat).***

Faith cannot be worked up. It is a gift from God. Faith gives substance to hope. The Amplified Bible defines faith this way:

***Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title-deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality – faith perceiving as real fact which is not revealed to the senses (Hebrews 11:1).***

Faith enables us to believe God for justification and all other benefits of the New Covenant.

## 8. HOW DO WE RECEIVE FAITH?

A. One thing we must know above all other things is God drew us to Himself, else we would not be saved.

*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out (John 6:37).*

B. Secondly, it is God who initiates the relationship through His Word.

*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17).*

FOR FURTHER STUDY: Read Ephesians 2:8-9.

## 9. WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION?

Justification is the act of God which frees believing sinners from the guilt and penalty of sin. Our guilt and punishment is transferred onto Jesus Christ. To be justified means you are righteous before God because of faith in Jesus Christ. We have “right(eous)-standing” with God through Faith.

Repentance from dead works coupled with Faith [that Jesus was made sin on your behalf] towards God means you have been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and the wrath of God no longer rests upon you.

***Much more than, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Romans 5:1-9).***

***If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).***

Once we are justified, our whole life is to be lived by faith.

***For there is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH (Romans 1:17).***

FOR FURTHER STUDY: See Isaiah 30:19-21.

## 10. HOW DO WE ENLARGE OUR FAITH?

We can enlarge our faith by prayer, by reading and studying the Word of God, by listening to the Word preached, by obediently working in the Lord's vineyard (doing what we are called upon to do for the Kingdom of God). Our faith is also enlarged when we heard inspiring testimonials concerning what God has done and is doing in the lives of other people.

*...And the Apostles said unto the Lord, increase our faith (Luke 17:15).*

*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17)*

*Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone (James 2:17).*

FOR FURTHER STUDY: See Isaiah 30:19-21.