

Repentance

(Adapted from Raymond Woodward's *Life Course 101*)

“But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die”
(Ezekiel 18:21).

REPENTANCE is actually the first step with action involved that we take toward salvation. Faith precedes repentance; it is the inward work that makes us want to repent. Repentance is a personal but often public step bringing about positive results in our lives. Because we have a sinful nature, and have committed sinful acts, it is essential that we repent.

1. Repentance is not the same as PENANCE, which is doing certain acts of devotion required by a priest to receive “absolution” for sin. This is not Biblical, but merely religious tradition.

“We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds, we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)

Repentance is not the same as
PENANCE!

2. Repentance is not merely “feeling sorry” for your sins, although that is part of it. In fact, it is this “godly sorrow” that causes us to repent!

“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10)

3. Repentance is biblically defined as a “turning around” or an “about face” – an inward change of attitude leading to an outward change of action. Unless both of these occur, real repentance has not taken place.

“... that they should repent and turn to God, and do works and live lives consistent with and worthy of their repentance.” (Acts 26:20)

“Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God.” (Matthew 3:8)

4. Repentance is absolutely essential for salvation. God wants to save us, but requires us to respond to His love by turning from sin.

“Don’t you realize how kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Or don’t you care? Can’t you see how kind he has been in giving you time to turn from your sin?” (Romans 2:4)

“People who cover over their sins will not prosper. But if they confess and forsake them, they will receive mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13)

“... And you will also perish unless you turn from your evil ways and turn to God.” (Luke 13:3)

“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)

5. When I repent, I am applying the DEATH of Christ to my life, making it effective in me!

“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.” (Galatians 5:24)

“Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.” (Romans 6:6-7, NLT)

Study Questions

1. Given the following statements about repentance, write out (with Scripture reference using King James Version of the Bible) at least one verse that supports the statement.

1) When I repent, I am applying the DEATH of Christ to my life. _____

2) Repentance is absolutely ESSENTIAL for salvation. _____

3) Repentance is not the same as PENANCE. _____

4) Repentance is not merely “feeling sorry” for your sins. _____

5) Repentance is biblically defined as an inward change of attitude, leading to an outward change of action. _____

2. Explain the difference between “repentance” and “penance.” _____
