

REPENTANCE

There are two things to consider with man's part in salvation:

I. Repentance and Faith.

Paul describes both of these in

[Act 20:21](#) Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ., and he puts repentance first.

A. Is repentance necessary for salvation?

It is commanded by God and it was preached:

1. by Christ ([Luke 13:3](#) **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**),
2. by Peter ([2Pe 3:9](#) 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.)
3. by Paul ([Act 17:30](#) And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:)
4. by John ([Mat 3:1](#) In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, [Mat 3:2](#) And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.)

Both repentance and faith are required for salvation, and the apostle Paul preached both.

([Act 20:21](#) Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.).

B. What are some false views of repentance?

1. *Repentance is not reformation or changing one's life.*

Salvation is not of human works; works follow salvation as the product ([Eph 2:8](#) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

[Eph 2:9](#) Not of works, lest any man should boast.

[Eph 2:10](#) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.).

Reformation deals with one's fellow man and with things in this life, whereas repentance deals with God and with eternal things.

We must be careful not to give people the impression that they must change their lives and give up their sin in order to be saved. The life-changing part of salvation is God's part, not man's.

2. *Repentance is not doing penance.*

Some Bibles translate "repentance" as "do penance."

This involves confession to a priest, contrition, absolution (forgiveness pronounced by the priest), and satisfaction. Penance is a works salvation which the Bible condemns.

3. *Repentance is not mere remorse for wrong actions.*

The Bible tells us that men can be remorseful about their actions without exercising genuine repentance unto salvation. This is described as the "sorrow of the world" in ([2Co 7:10](#) For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.). There are key examples of this in the Old and the New Testaments.

King Saul is the prime Old Testament example. He was sorry that he got caught in various sinful acts, but he did not demonstrate repentance because his actions did not change

1Sa 15:24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.
 ; 1Sa 24:17 And he said to David, Thou *art* more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.
 ; 1Sa 26:21 Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.
 Judas is a New Testament example of a man who was remorseful but did not repent toward God (Mat 27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,
 Mat 27:4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*).

4. *Repentance is not merely believing in Christ.*

Some have defined repentance as the same as believing. One well-known preacher defined it as “turning from unbelief to belief.” But if this were true, the Bible preachers would not have preached repentance. We have seen that Paul preached repentance toward God AND faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ (Act 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.).

Consider Acts 26:20(Act 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.), where he demanded that the believers “do works meet for repentance.” This doesn’t mean that repentance is to do good works; it means that repentance is a dramatic change of mind regarding God’s Word and its complete acceptance as authority and that leads to good works.

C. What is biblical repentance?

1. *Repentance is admitting that I have sinned against God and being sorry for that (Acts 20:21).*
 Repentance is “toward God” because it is God that I have offended. He made man for Himself, and He made man to obey His laws. But we have turned our backs on Him and broken His laws, and He requires that we repent of this. Repentance is admitting that I am not good, that even my supposed righteousness is as filthy rags before a thrice holy God (Isa 64:6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.).

2. *Repentance means to turn from our self, our philosophy, to God’s directions (Act 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.).*
 It is something that happens in the heart and mind.

3. *Repentance means to surrender to God’s rule (Isa 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and there is none else.*
 Isa 45:23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.).

4. *Repentance is to receive Christ as Lord*

(Rom 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
 Rom 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom 10:11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.).

To believe is to receive Jesus Christ as my *only Saviour* and to repent is to receive Him as my *only Lord*. We see this throughout the New Testament. Those who received Jesus in a saving manner called upon Him as Lord (Luk 23:42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.).

5. Repentance is not a change of life; it is a change of mind about God and sin that results in a change of life.

Many who “believe” or “pray the sinner’s prayer” have no intention to change. They are not interested in being a disciple of Christ. They want a ticket to heaven that keeps them out of hell, but they want to continue to live as they please. They want to believe in Jesus, but they are not willing to obey Him. That is not biblical salvation. The sinner must be ready to turn from his false gods, including self-worship, in order to worship and serve the true God.

III. The Bible warns that it is possible to *profess* Christ without *possessing* Christ.

A. Consider the following powerful Scriptures which describe many people even in Bible-believing churches: (Tit 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.); (1Jn 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.)

1. It is not enough to “believe in Jesus.” Even the devils believe (James 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.). In fact, the devils tremble, which is far more than the average “Christian” does!

2. The Bible says that many believed in Jesus but He did not commit Himself to them, because He knew they were not believing in Him in the right way

(Joh 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

Joh 2:24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,

Joh 2:25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.).

3. They didn’t believe in Him as Lord and Saviour; they believed in him as someone to provide their needs and protect them from their earthly enemies (John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.). They believed in him as a great prophet but not as their only God and only Saviour.

4. Jesus warned that many of those who claim to know Him are deceived (Mat 7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.).

B. Repentance is the missing element in the lives of many ‘professing’ Christians.

Consider the actions of those individuals raised in church and how that only a few of the young people “stuck.”

Most left church when they reached adolescence.

As I look back, I can see that lack of salvation was a major problem.

My personal experience was typical.

I made a profession of faith, but it was void of spiritual reality.

There was *no* change in my life. There was no passion for Christ, no love for the Word of God, no earnest seeking after God's will. My passion was pleasure and my God was self. Why? I had never been born again, and that seems to be the condition of most if not all of the professing Christians in today's churches.

It is sad that we can hardly find a young person in church that is serious about the things of God.

The one thing that seems to be missing is biblical repentance.

Most "believe" in Jesus, as the devils believe in God, but it is not a saving faith because it was divorced from repentance.

C. Salvation is a personal relationship with Christ.

1. Salvation is not a religion.
2. It is not a matter of believing things and doing things.
3. It is a personal relationship with Jesus.

D. The questions for each individual are:

1. Do you know Jesus personally as Lord and Saviour?
2. Do you have a real relationship with Him?
3. Do you walk and talk with Him?

This is salvation! See (Joh 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.)