

REPENTANCE

(Wellsford Fellowship – 7/9/86)

Repentance

1. Paul's experience – *Ac 26:12-16*.
2. Paul's message – *Ac 26:18-20*

Before his conversion and repentance, Paul, (as Saul), was opposed to Christ, the message of the Gospel, and to the testimony of the Christian believers. He was on his way to arrest believers in Christ and imprison them. On the way to Damascus he met the risen Lord Jesus. His response to this meeting was one of **full repentance**. Paul turned 180 degrees and headed in the opposite direction. He acknowledged Jesus as his Lord, he believed in Christ, preached the gospel, and encouraged others who believed. He became a minister of the gospel, and exhorted people wherever he went **to repent and turn to God**, as he had done.

Repentance means to turn away from sin, evil and wrong doing, and to turn to God. It is to turn away from things that come between you and God. Someone said it is to, “get rid of the dirt that is between you and the Rock”, and turn to God in faith and obedience.

Scriptures that refer to repentance.

Pro 1:23, Jer 31:18,19, Job 36:7-11, Job 33:27-29, Ezk 18:30-32, Ps 32:5,6, Joel 2:12,13, Pro 28:13, Ps 66:18, Eph 4:22-32, Col 3:5-14, Ac 19:13-20, Ac 26:18,20.

Actually repentance goes far deeper than turning away from acts of wrongdoing, sin and evil.

True, or necessary repentance, strikes a death blow, to what went wrong in the heart of man at the **Fall** in *Gen 3:5*.

Satan tempted man to disobey God's law, *Gen 2:17*, to become independent, self sufficient, self willed, self pleasing, self centred, going his own way, doing his own thing, self motivated, self fulfilling, self achieving, and self determining, i.e. to **be as god**.

The temptation was “your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods.” Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and obey the temptation of Satan.

The result of their sin and rebellion against God's law was that man in his own heart became self willed, independent from god and self-sufficient. The heart of man became corrupt in self-centredness, and lost its God-centredness. The heart of man became rebellious towards God's will. *Is 53:6* – All of us have gone astray, we have erred everyone to his own way.

The Lord describes this as iniquity.

Rom 3:10-12, Deut 12:8, Jer 17:9, Gen 8:21, Mat 15:19, Eph 2:3, Eph 4:22.

Repentance is far more radical than getting rid of acts of wrong, evil and sin. These acts of wrong are the fruit of the tree, not the root of the tree. The root of the tree is the corruption in man's heart, mentioned above, that entered at the **Fall**.

Repentance is laying the axe to the root of the tree of self-will, *Mat 3:10*. True repentance deals a deathblow to self-will, independence from God, and all self-sufficiency.

Jesus did not have the root of self-willed independence operating in his life. *Jn 4:34, Jn 5:19,30, Jn 6:38, Jn 8:28,29, Jn 14:10*. Jesus said, "I do nothing of myself." *Jn 8:28*.

Paul met Jesus on the Damascus road, *Ac 26:12-16*, and the root of self-willed activity was severed. After that he was a bond slave of Jesus Christ to do the will of God. *Phil 1:1*. Brethren, we need a personal meeting with the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Repentance was the message of:

1. John the Baptist. *Mat 3:2, Mat 3:8, Mat 3:10, Lk 3:3*.
2. Jesus' ministry. *Mk 1:14,15, Mat 4:17, Mat 9:13, Lk 13:3,5, Lk 15:7,10*.
3. Jesus' apostles, *Mk 6:12*.
4. Jesus as Lord of glory to the Seven Churches, *Rev 2:5,16,21,22, Rev 3:3,19*.
5. Apostles and ministers of the Gospel in the New Testament Church. *Ac 2:38, Ac 3:19, Ac 17:30, Ac20:21, Ac 26:20, Heb 6:1*.

Repentance is the point at which a person makes Jesus Christ the Lord of their life. Repentance is making Jesus Christ number one. It is to bring everything in a person's life under the authority and Lordship of Jesus Christ. *Rom 10:9* says "that if you confess with your lips that Jesus Christ is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Jesus said, "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well; for so I am," *Jn 13:13*.

Repentance is total surrender of all, to Jesus Christ. This action deals with the root of the self-life, and releases the individual believer to be a disciple, and an obedient follower and servant of Christ.

Lk 6:46. "Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Mat 7:21. "Not everyone that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven."

We do need also to repent of the "fruits" of the self life, those acts and attitudes, and words of wrong doing, e.g. pride, unforgiveness, envy, doubt, fear, anxiety, insecurity, unbelief, inferiority, bitterness, hard feelings, anger, arrogance, impatience, lust, greed, immorality, idolatry, sensuality, materialism, covetousness, pleasure seeking, rebellion, swearing, lying, despising others, being happy at others' misfortune, telling others what we think they would like to hear, manipulation, domination of others, putting others down, fear of rejection, pretence, fear of man, hypocrisy, laziness and so many other fruits of the root of self.

Repentance is God's work He enables us to repent by the working of the Holy Spirit. We repent as God enables us by His grace. *Ac 11:18, 2Tim 2:25,26, Rev 3:19, Rom 2:4, Phil 2:13, Ps 139:23,24*.

How God leads us to repentance.

1. By the preaching of the Word, *Ac 2:36-38, Mat 4:17, Ac 17:30*.
2. By chastening and rebuke, *Heb 12:5-11, Rev 3:19*.
3. By shaking, *Heb 12:27*.
4. By revelation of Jesus Christ as Lord. *Ac 26:13-15*.
5. By reading God's Word, *Ps 119:9*.
6. By Christian counsel.

Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Saviour.

It is important that we come to God through repentance, making Jesus Lord of our lives, before we receive Him as Saviour. A.W. Tozer did not consider it possible for a person to know Jesus as Saviour, if he/she did not first know Him as Lord. Jesus' Lordship is His authority, and requires our obedience to His will. *Lk 6:46*. Jesus as Saviour is talking about His grace, blessings and mercy. As we share and preach the Gospel, we must preach the need to repent, and to surrender our lives to Jesus Christ as Lord. When people become Christians on the basis of repentance to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, they go on to discipleship and obedience, fulfilling God's will and purposes for them. If people become Christians on the basis of accepting Jesus as Saviour, without His Lordship and the need of repentance, the root of self remains, and lack of commitment, discipleship and effective service results.

The Steps for the Process of Repentance.

1. Be honest and open-hearted with God about the problem area, and sinful bondage, where repentance is necessary, *1Jn 1:9, Pro 28:13*.
2. Refuse all condemnation from Satan, *Rom 5:8,10*. God did not condemn us when we were His enemies, before our conversion.
3. Refuse all self-striving, to change and cleanse your own life from some root of sin, and sinful bondage. Willpower is not strong enough to cleanse our heart from sin.
4. Hand the problem over to God. God alone can cleanse our hearts from sin. *Jer 31:18, Eph 2:10, 1Jn 1:9, Heb 9:14, Rom 6:14*.
5. Call upon the Lord earnestly. *Rom 10:13, Ps 51:10-12, Rom 12:1,2*.
6. Move in faith by the promises of God. *2Cor 7:1, 2Pet 1:4, Phil 2:13, Heb 13:20,21, 1Thes 5:23,24, Deut 30:6, Heb 8:10-12, Rom 6:6,11,14,22, Ps 51:10, Ezk 36:25-27*.
7. Be persistent, *Lk 11:5-13, Lk 18:1*.
8. Seek mature Christian counsel and prayer support.
9. Realise that Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, and that He knows how to uphold us in times of testing. *Heb 4:15,16, Heb 2:18, 1Cor 10:13, Is 41:10, Is 43:1-3, Heb 13:5,6*.