

Repentance

Repentance is a primary concept in the word of God, foundational in the Bible.

Jeremiah 25:4-5 "And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. "They said, 'Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever.

Basic Underpinning of God's Word

This was the message of the prophets and apostles. "Repent NOW!" The people were doing wrong. But they wouldn't listen. – EVERY true prophet or teacher will say this. It's a message from God, though decidedly out of fashion today.

Mark 1:1-4 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'" John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

It was John the Baptist's message. He came preaching repentance. It's in the Old Testament, and the New Testament. Then, after John the Baptist said these words, another came saying the same thing. Look who THAT was!

Verses 9-15 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him. Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

It was Christ's message. And what were the *very first* words of this message? REPENT, and believe the good news of the kingdom of God.

Luke 24:46-47 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

In the book of Revelation, at the very end of the Bible, chapters 2-3, the messages to churches, "repent" said eight times. Including to the church in the end time. "Be zealous and repent" This is what God wants, it's what he has always wanted.

Revelation 9:20-21 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their

sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

God does these things to get man's attention. They wouldn't change what they were doing, unproductive false things. Today Satan is openly worshipped! The great tribulation comes to cause men to quit these harmful practices, and to abandon wrong ideas.

Revelation 16:9-11 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

Why do all these things have to happen? Because men refuse to change, to repent! It's for their *own good* to stop what they are doing and thinking, not because God gets some perverse pleasure out of inflicting pain. All they had to do was repent, quit doing and thinking those things. If they would, then look what happens?

Revelation 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

Come out, don't *do* that! You won't get "smacked" then. The people of God are warned all the way to the end. Repent! It's the only thing God wants. It's so very important! We need to *fully* understand what it means.

What does the word mean? What are it's' definitions? There is the worldly definition, which is to "feel sorry." But it's not only that. Yes, feel regret, but something is to be *done*. The commonly accepted way most people think is, to be sorry you got *caught*! In the Bible, the original Hebrew and Greek word definitions indicate: sorry, regret, remorse, yes, but more. "To think differently, reconsider, change ones mind, turn (from or away" Change direction, from a wrong way to right way. But "turn" from what to what?

Do This, Not That

Luke 5:30-32 And the Pharisees and their scribes murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are in health have no need of a physician; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. (ASV)

Away from sin, lawlessness, the "no rules" thinking that is so popular today. His mission was to call people going the wrong way, to the right way. Where are they to turn? Into right-ness. Sin, it seems everybody has his or her own idea of what it is. We don't need to speculate or guess. God's word gives a very clear definition:

1 John 3:4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

Lawlessness, "against the law," the law of God. Anything not according to what God says is right. That is what sin is, not the many ideas people come up with. The law of God defines sin, there are 10, and corollaries called "statutes and judgments." (Not the "law" of *rituals* to show how to deal with

error, which were temporary.) Man has made every kind of law, attempting himself to define sin. All have failed. Religious people define what they think is sin, but it isn't what God says. There is only one perfect law, and that's from God. This is not some Old Testament thing, that has been "done away." (See Colossians 2:14) Paul clearly states it, long after everything which was "done away" had been:

Romans 7:12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

It's simply guidelines on how to live your life, so you and everyone around you can be happy. Only the true principles from God are this way. Sin, therefore, is turning away from the way God says to live. It's that simple.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Man's way, the way we naturally think, is in the end fatal. We have God's word, and his truth. Doing it is for our good, best for everyone. But, people are repulsed by rules, aren't you? But God gives the minimum, the essential principles we are to live by. It is his character encapsulated. HE is this way! It has the fewest restrictions, to avoid trampling on the rights of others, for the maximum freedom for everybody.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

All scripture adds to the meaning of the basic law, to better understand what, and how to do it.

Verse 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Gives wisdom. We want to know how to live forever.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Penalty of going the wrong way, and reward for going the right way. There cannot be opposition (living contrary to God's defining law) eternally. If you don't want God's way you will be mercifully put out of existence. Just do what he says. Obedience to what is right is not a bad thing. Stop signs are there to keep everyone safe. It's for our benefit. We don't know "right" by ourselves. We have all made mistakes so we all must "repent" and change from our error. So what should we do? Repent! Don't repeat wrong behavior. Disappointingly, this can be a real challenge!

Romans 2:22-24 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,

2 Timothy 2:24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

We must always endeavor to live rightly, not doing wrong against other people and God. Isn't that

what you want others to do toward you? Though trying, we fall short. God has a way to deal with this problem we all have.

1 John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

God calls and gives repentance. He invites and shows us the need to change. People need help to see what they need. Ask God to show you what you need to do.

2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Sorrow in a godly manner results in repentance. It produces repentance which causes change from what we were to what we should be, which leads to salvation. There are no regrets in God's way of life. Repentance is essential. Change the way we think, using God's word to see how we should be thinking and doing.

Isaiah 55:6-9 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

God thinks differently than we do. Wicked is a term for people doing wrong *habitually*. Wrong thoughts which lead to wrong actions. Wrong, being anything not agreeing with what God's law indicates. "Return to the LORD" means to repent, turn again to God and His way. The Bible uses the word "carnal" (normal natural thinking) vs. "converted" (changed to think and be like God.) We don't naturally see God's way as working. The idea we should turn the other cheek? That's foolish! NAIL THEM! So we need to see God's ways in comparison to ours.

Acts 2:37-39 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

This is done via the Holy Spirit, and the word of God, the Bible, and the *whole* Bible, which instructs us in so doing. The people Peter spoke to saw they were wrong they had remorse, sorrow. They are told to repent! That's how to fix it. Change isn't easy. Even kids don't want to do what they should. Most learn in life that it's better to change, (and: get through school, keep your job, and stay out of jail!) Job, upright and blameless, had misery though he hadn't done wrong, but he had wrong *thinking* about God. He finally looked at himself and his understanding, and found he was wrong.

Job 42:5-6 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."

He didn't want to be wrong. So Job repented, wanting to change. Paul also. He *thought* he was right.

Romans 7:21-25 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God--through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

He, many years on, still struggled to do right. We have physical pulls and desires in us which are wrong. Satan (our spiritual adversary) uses these. We need to stop doing and thinking wrongly, "sinning." It's what we do naturally.

1 Peter 4:1-5 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Christ go against the law in any way, He didn't "sin." We are supposed to think and do as HE did. He was God. That's what God is and does, what is in His law. Do and think right, what He would do. Just for added incentive, the Bible indicates that a day is coming when we will give account. (Romans 14:12) Something to think about.

What to DO?

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

It's not just *don't* but also *DO*. Basic doctrines, the first is repentance - change from dead works

Acts 26:20 "but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

What do shows that you have repented. If we change our thinking it will follow that there is also a change in what we do. Our lives will be lived differently, in a big way at first. But even if just by a little bit with each thing we learn for the rest of our lives.

James 1:21-25 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Many study the Bible in an attempt to find loopholes, ways to get OUT of keeping the law. If that's

what you want, you will find it. Major religions are founded upon that principle! But if you look to find what you *should* be doing, asking God to show you, then God will lead you to find it. (1 John 5:20) But it can't stop there; you must take action when you understand God's will. If you just read, hear, and agree, but don't *do*, you deceive yourself (into thinking you are good.)

Acts 17:30-31 "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

So, now we've heard how all must repent. Will you? Will you do what you know is right, from God's law? If so, you are assured of an eternal life of joy and happiness, (Psalms 16:11) everyone there will have repented, and become like Him. Will you be one of them? Repent.