

# Repentance

“No man can serve two masters.”

# Repentance from dead works

This study will discuss:

1. Repent, the message of the New Testament
2. False and true repentance
3. Jesus is Lord
4. Preparing the heart for faith

*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other,” Matt. 6:24*

*It is impossible to please two people at the same time if they are wanting you to act in two conflicting ways. This is the same in your spiritual life. Satan wants you to continue serving yourself and death. God wants you to serve righteousness and life. You can only choose to walk in one of these kingdoms at a time.*

*In order to serve righteousness, you must leave the land of “self-service.” There must be a change in your heart resulting from true sorrow for selfishness. Then, and only then, you are able to put your faith in the Lord Jesus for salvation.*

*You turn from being lord of your own life and begin to follow Jesus as Lord.*

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# 1. Repent, the message of the New Testament

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Repentance was the message preached which ushered in the kingdom of God. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, 'Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

## **Some definitions**

What does the word repentance mean?

- Metanoeo– To change one's mind and purpose (Strong's).
- Shub– To return (Strong's).
- To turn from evil and to turn to the good (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament).
- In religious usage, to feel so contrite over one's sins as to change, or decide to change, one's ways; be penitent (Webster's).

## **Authorities**

Many different people called for repentance.

- John the Baptist. Matt. 3:1-2
- Jesus. Matt. 4:17
- Peter. Acts 3:18-19
- God. Acts 17:30
- Paul. Acts 26:19-20

## **An example**

The prodigal son is an example of repentance. (Read Lk. 15:11-32.)

- He came to his senses. v. 17
- He made the decision to return. v. 18
- He acted on his decision. v. 19

## Questions

**1. Write a scriptural definition of repentance.**

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**2. Write a definition of repentance from reference books.**

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## 2. False and true repentance

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For every truth of God there is a counterfeit. False repentance is a dead work which will not lead to the joy of faith.

### **False repentance**

False repentance is not fruitful.

- The Pharisees were bringing forth bad fruit, showing false repentance. Matt. 3:7-10
- Judas had a false repentance. Matt. 27:3-5  
Here the word repent is the Greek word *metamelomai*. It means pain of mind or troubled; it has nothing to do with moral change.  
This kind of repentance (self-pity) led to suicide.

### **True repentance**

- True repentance comes from God. 2 Tim. 2:25
- God's goodness draws us to true repentance. Rom. 2:4
- Godly sorrow brings true repentance (as opposed to self-centered sorrow). 2 Cor. 7:9-10; Ps. 34:8

### **Dead works**

Repentance is from dead works. Heb. 6:1

- Sin is selfishness, or doing your own thing. Gal. 5:17, Rom. 8:5-8
- Sins of omission are not doing what God told you. Jm. 4:17; Lk. 11:42
- Sin is transgression of the law. 1 Jn. 3:4
- Even our "righteous acts" are dead works.

## Questions

**1. What is the difference between true and false repentance?**

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**2. Give four categories of “dead works.”**

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## 3. Jesus is Lord!

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When you repent you are deciding to no longer live according to your own rule (which is really the rule of Satan). Instead, you are coming to Jesus Christ and giving Him the rightful place or ruling in your life. He is now your Lord and King. Since that is the case, you now live in His Kingdom.

### Decision

You must make an active choice to change Kingdoms.

- The choice is yours. Jos. 24:15
- You cannot live in both kingdoms. Matt. 6:24
- No decision is a decision. Matt. 12:30; Mk. 9:40

### Changes

A new kingdom has a new King.

- Jesus is King and Lord! 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14  
Kings are to be obeyed. 1 Pet. 2:13  
Even nature obeys King Jesus. Mk. 4:41; Lk. 8:25  
Obedience involves three steps (Jam. 1:22-25):
  1. Listen
  2. Hear
  3. Obey
- Jesus is a King who rules in love and righteousness.  
Love. Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:16  
Righteousness. Heb. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:5
- Jesus wants to reproduce His character in His nation. 2 Pet. 1:4  
Love. Jam. 2:8; Mk. 12:29-31  
Righteousness. 1 Pet. 2:9
- You cannot see the Kingdom of God with natural eyes.  
It is in men's hearts. Lk. 17:20-21; Jn. 3:5-8  
It is a kingdom of men with changed character. Rom. 14:17;  
Gal. 5:19-24

## Questions

**1. Describe how repentance brings obedience to Jesus.**

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**2. What is the Kingdom of God?**

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## 4. Preparing the heart for faith

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“Therefore say thou unto them, ‘Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, turn ye unto Me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts,’” (Zechariah 1:3). Repentance causes us to humble ourselves before God and look to Him for help. It is as we turn to Him that we can see His ability and trust in Him.

### Seeing God

Salvation is by grace through faith. The word faith means, “to put your trust in and rely upon.” Rom. 1:16-17

- It is not by works. Eph. 2:8
- Faith is based on knowing God’s promises and what He has done. Rom. 10:17

### Seeing yourself

Repentance turns the heart away from self and sin, so that you might look to God for salvation.

- Repentance has two turnings: away from sin and toward God. Jam. 4:6-10; 2 Chron. 7:14
- Repentance involves recognizing your condition. 2 Chron. 7:9-10; Isa. 6:5
- Recognizing and confessing your condition puts you in a position to receive. Matt. 5:3-6; Jn. 16:20
- As you look to God from this position of humility and sorrow, you will put your faith in Him. Ps. 72:12; Lk. 5:31

## Questions

1. How does repentance prepare the heart for faith?

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2. What are the two directions of repentance?

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## 5. Point of decision

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Repentance is a decision to change and allow Jesus to rule your life. It is this change of heart which is the groundwork from which true faith can spring. Many people try to use their “faith” to build on the old self life. However, faith can only be used to build lives that are under the authority of the King of Kings. You must change from “self-rule” in order to go on in the Kingdom.

Repentance is an attitude as well as an act. The Christian life begins with repentance, but must also continue with an attitude of repentance. This could be called a humble spirit or one who is “poor in spirit.” Maintaining this attitude of brokenness makes us teachable and allows both God and those around us to point out sin in our lives and thus direct us again toward the cross.

