

## REPENTANCE

Repentance is a topic that should concern all. The salvation of the alien sinner is incumbent upon repentance. Peter told those Jews on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you..." (Acts 2:38). However, the restoring of the child of God who has sinned includes repentance as well. Peter told Simon the sorcerer, who had heard, believed and was baptized, but had sinned, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:21-22). Since all have need of repentance, it would do us well to consider the subject.

Let us begin by defining repentance. Mr. Thayer, in his Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament defines the Greek word (metanoian) that is translated "repentance" as, "to change one's mind, i.e. to repent". The Bible itself provides an excellent illustration that shows what the word means. Jesus told some of the Jewish leaders, "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went" (Matt. 21:28-29).

Now that we understand that repentance is something that takes place in an individual's mind, in fact a change of one's mind, we might consider briefly what is needed to trigger such change of mind in the realm of serving God. The apostle Paul told the Corinthians, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (II Cor. 7:10). In other words, it is when one realizes that they have not been pleasing to the God of heaven that they change their minds about how they should live in order to please God. It is the word of God that pricks the honest heart to bring forth repentance. It is said of those Jews on the day of Pentecost, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said...Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

One last point concerning repentance is that if it is true repentance, it should bring forth some change of life. As John the Baptist preached the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Lk. 3:3), he said "to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance..." (Lk. 3:7-8). Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of action.

*Robert*

## GOD'S WORD IS:

The Bible is the inspired word of God ((II Tim. 3:16-17). Specifically, for this Christian age, the New Testament, also known as the gospel of Christ is the inspired word by which we are to be judged in the last day (I Pet. 1:25; Rom. 2:16). To this inspired word is ascribed many functions.

The word of God is the seed of the kingdom. In the parable of the soils, found in the eighth chapter of Luke, the seed that is planted is the word of God (Luke 8:11). Now, it is important to remember the seed principle that God inaugurated at the creation. Everything will reproduce after its own kind (Gen. 1:11-12). It may be that Paul's explanation is easier for some to understand. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Using the seed principle and knowing that the word of God is the seed of the kingdom, one must plant the word of God and nothing else if he desires to grow Christians. Plant the Methodist Discipline and you will grow Methodist. Plant the Book of Mormon and you will grow Mormons. It is by the planting of the word of God that one is born again (I Pet. 1:23). Do keep in mind that one MUST be born again in order to enter heaven (John 3:3-5).

The word of God is also a light to guide our way (Psalm 119:105). Until we walk in the light (I John 1:7), we will be in darkness; stumbling over every obstacle and finally, as the blind man, fall into the ditch (Matt. 16:14). As Paul pointed out to Timothy, the scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:16).

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). The sword is the only offensive weapon that we have at our disposal. Never fear however, for it is powerful enough to get the job done as neatly as did the stone from David's sling. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (II Cor. 10:4). Paul told the Romans that it is the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). The Hebrew writer said that, "...the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

Friend, study the word of God and follow it!

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