

## **Repentance** by Stephen Moore

- *Read Genesis 3:8*

God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden so that they could enjoy relationship together. Adam and Eve however disobeyed God and as a result of their disobedience they turned their backs on God and hid themselves among the trees. Every person has inherited a sinful nature from Adam and Eve and each of us is guilty before God.

- *Read Genesis 3:9*

God came down to the Garden to spend time with Adam and Eve and He called out “Where are you?” The vast bulk of the Bible is a record of mankind turning their backs on God and God calling them to repent and enjoy a restored relationship with Him once again.

### **Meaning of repentance**

The English word repent is translated from a few different Bible words and each of these words provides us with a different aspect to repentance.

- *Read Genesis 6:6-7*

The word “repented” in Genesis 6:6 means “to be sorry” and God was sorry about the sin of mankind in Noah’s day. God is holy and He always reacts to sin in a consistent manner. There are two ways in which God consistently reacts to sin:

1. God is always sorry about sin  
“The Lord was grieved.....His heart was filled with pain.”
2. God always punishes sin  
“I will wipe mankind.....from the face of the earth.”

To repent means to be sorry and when a person repents there will undoubtedly be sorrow over their sin. The person agrees with God that sin is serious and they sorrow about their sin as God sorrows about their sin.

- *Read 2Corinthians 7:10*

Sorrow over sin brings repentance that leads to salvation i.e. forgiveness and restoration. The goal of repentance is always salvation.

- *Read Ezekiel 14:6*

The word “repent” in Ezekiel 14:6 means “to turn.” To turn means to change direction so instead of a person turning and walking away from God they turn, change direction and walk towards God. This involves putting God first instead of ourselves.

- *Read Mark 1:15*

The word that Jesus used for “repent” in Mark 1:15 means “to think differently/change your mind.” Repentance involves a change of mind about God and sin. This change of mind may include believing that God is real, holy and that He must punish sin. It will certainly involve changing your mind about sin understanding that it is serious resulting in a person turning from sin to God. Ultimately repentance is agreeing with God!

### **Biblical illustration of the meaning of repentance**

- *Read Matthew 21:28-32*

True repentance will involve all of these actions – being sorry, turning and thinking differently. All will occur when a person comes to Jesus Christ for forgiveness. The person will be sorry about their sin, will turn from their sin, and trust Jesus Christ to forgive their sin.

### **A grim diagnosis**

- *Read Romans 5:6-11, Ephesians 2:1-3*

The Bible describes mankind as being separated from God, unrighteous, enemies of God, ungodly, without strength, dead in trespasses and sins, children of the devil and so on. The diagnosis is very grim.

### **Promised spiritual blessings**

- *Read Ephesians 1:3-8, 2:4-7*

The Bible also offers many spiritual blessings in Christ such as redemption, restoration, reconciliation, justification, relationship, eternal life, hope, joy, cleansing, regeneration, a new heart, a new creation, sanctification, and forgiveness etc.

These spiritual blessings are only available in Jesus Christ because He alone is the perfect sacrifice for sins. He died for our sins in our place and rose again for our salvation. There is nothing that anyone can do to take away their own sin and gain favour with God. We need a Saviour.

### **Repentance is the trigger for salvation**

- *Read Acts 3:19*

The diagnosis is grim but how can the spiritual blessings in Christ be imparted and imputed to the sinner? Repentance is the trigger and the catalyst for salvation and for all the spiritual blessings being imparted to the sinner.

### **The necessity of repentance**

- *Read Luke 13:3, John 5:40, 2Peter 3:9*

If someone does not repent then they will perish. To “perish” means to be judged and punished for your own individual sin before God. If a person refuses to repent and turn to God they will never obtain the life that Jesus Christ offers them. That life is eternal life which is a relationship with God. God does not want anyone to perish but He wants them to repent.

### **The command to repent**

- *Read Acts 17:30*

God command everyone to repent because God does not want anyone to miss out on His salvation. A command from God must be obeyed immediately and to disobey God like Adam and Eve is a sin.

## **The results of repentance**

- *Read Luke 15:10*

The sinner who repents brings joy to God and causes all of Heaven to rejoice. The opposite is true as well – if a person refuses to repent they bring sadness to God.

- *Read Matthew 3:8, Luke 19:8, Acts 26:20*

John the Baptist preached that people should repent and produce fruit (evidence) of their repentance. In other words mere sorrow like Judas is not enough. Zacchaeus stole money from people and the authorities but whenever He met Jesus he repented and his life was changed. The evidence that Zacchaeus repented was that he paid back fourfold any money that he had stolen. In other words sorrow was not enough, the cessation of stealing was not enough, but making things right was the evidence of his repentance.

Paul explained that the thrust of his message to the people of Damascus, Jerusalem, Judea and to the Gentiles everywhere was that they should repent and prove their repentance by their deeds. Repentance changes lives and produces fruit.